



Directorate of
Intelligence

Top Secret

El Salvador: Guerrilla Capabilities and Prospects Over the Next Two Years

An Intelligence Assessment

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(T)

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: APR 2002

Top Secret

October 1984
Copy 292

62 MFW



Directorate of
Intelligence

~~Top Secret~~

El Salvador: Guerrilla Capabilities and Prospects Over the Next Two Years

An Intelligence Assessment

~~Top Secret~~

October 1984

BLANK PAGE

Top Secret

**El Salvador: Guerrilla
Capabilities and Prospects
Over the Next Two Years**

Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 21 September 1984
was used in this report.*

The election of the Duarte government and the increasing aggressiveness of the Salvadoran military have put the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) on the defensive, but we believe the insurgents will continue to pose a serious challenge to the government for the next two years at least. The guerrillas remain strong enough to regain the initiative for short periods. Nonetheless, we believe declining popular support, internal factionalism, and shortages of ammunition and other basic supplies will prevent them from carrying out a sustained offensive against the government or shifting the military balance decisively in their favor in the next two years. This assessment assumes continued US support for the Salvadoran Government, at least at present levels.

We believe the guerrillas' planned fall offensive--if it occurs--is unlikely to alter the military balance. A statistical analysis of guerrilla-initiated actions since 1981 shows that military activity has not increased since mid-1982, but that the proportion of guerrilla incidents involving civilian targets has grown considerably in recent years. This suggests that serious problems within the insurgent movement are inhibiting military progress and forcing the guerrillas to prey increasingly on the civilian population. Intelligence available to us indicates that the guerrillas perceive that such problems preclude them from launching a general offensive with any realistic expectation of overthrowing the government.

They hope instead to mount at least a few "spectacular" attacks on important military and economic targets in order to erode Salvadoran military morale and US public support for the Reagan administration's policy in El Salvador.

Some of the more serious problems confronting the guerrillas are:

- Shortages of food, medicine, and clothing, which have hurt morale and spurred many recent recruits to defect. Such shortages have led to a dramatic increase in robberies and kidnappings this year, and they could tightly constrain efforts to increase force levels.
- The FMLN's inability to broaden popular support, which has impaired guerrilla performance and undercut the FMLN's potential. Even in areas dominated by the major factions, the FMLN has failed to provide goods, services, and security to potential supporters. Moreover, forced recruitment, constant harassment, and the expropriation of foodstuffs and other basic necessities have alienated much of the population.

Top Secret

OCTOBER 1984

~~Top Secret~~

- Fundamental differences in ideology and policy as well as personal rivalries, which continue to plague the alliance despite some progress toward better coordination of guerrilla military operations.
- The FMLN's vulnerability to reductions in foreign assistance, which has been underscored by several developments during the past year [redacted] Nicaragua and Cuba have considered—but not yet implemented—cuts in their assistance and that other foreign countries and some humanitarian organizations have reduced their funding and political support. Although the guerrillas probably can come close to maintaining current arms inventories by capturing weapons from the Salvadoran military, we believe they will continue to depend on external suppliers for most of their ammunition, communications support, and substantial amounts of food and other supplies.

Despite these constraints, guerrilla combat effectiveness is high, communications are sophisticated, and the FMLN's ability to collect and disseminate intelligence on the armed forces is excellent. The FMLN has kept 9,000 to 11,000 guerrillas and militia in the field for over three years, during which time the number of well-armed, well-trained, and combat-experienced fighters has climbed steadily to between 6,000 and 8,000. [redacted] despite harsh living conditions, the bulk of the insurgents continue to exhibit great tenacity and an abiding commitment to the guerrilla struggle.

Taking these factors into account, we believe the FMLN will continue to pose a substantial military threat to the Duarte government, although it probably will experience some degradation in its overall capabilities during the next two years. We judge the most likely guerrilla scenario will see total force strength dropping by 1,000 to 3,000, and greater emphasis placed on urban operations and terrorism. Insurgent activity probably will increase in western El Salvador, if only to relieve pressure on FMLN forces and supply corridors elsewhere in the country.

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

Even if guerrilla degradation is more rapid than we presently foresee and circumstances strongly favor government initiatives, we doubt that insurgent force levels would drop by more than half in the next two years. Several thousand insurgents have now spent a minimum of two years in the field and seem likely to persist even under extremely adverse circumstances. Havana and Managua might decide to reduce aid but probably could provide enough assistance to sustain at least 6,000 experienced combatants. We believe such a hard core of well-armed, combat-experienced guerrillas operating mostly from traditional strongholds along the Honduran border would continue to pose major problems for the government. Insurgent base areas in the west and, to a lesser extent, in southeastern El Salvador would be far more vulnerable to government operations.

Should trends unexpectedly favor the guerrillas during the next two years, we judge that logistic constraints and their small popular base would still prevent the FMLN from achieving a final military victory. The guerrillas probably could field a few thousand more combatants, but they would be confronting a Salvadoran military that would be over three times their size and more than their match if equipped at present levels. The guerrillas most likely would expand operations in urban areas and western El Salvador, while consolidating their position in the east. Cuba and Nicaragua probably would accelerate assistance under these circumstances in an effort to help the FMLN cement its gains.

The guerrillas will watch the US election closely and probably reassess their strategy in late 1984. Whether they decide to emphasize a two-pronged negotiate-and-fight strategy or opt primarily for a military approach will depend largely on their reading of the next administration's willingness to make concessions.

Top Secret

BLANK PAGE

Top Secret

Contents

| | <i>Page</i> |
|---|-------------|
| Key Judgments | iii |
| Scope Note | ix |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Shifting Guerrilla Strategy | 1 |
| Force Development and Capabilities | 3 |
| Key Weaknesses and Vulnerabilities | 4 |
| Basic Needs | 4 |
| Popular Support | 4 |
| Factionalism | 7 |
| Foreign Assistance | 9 |
| The Performance Record | 11 |
| Projecting Near-Term Capabilities | 14 |
| Most Likely Outcome | 15 |
| Substantial Guerrilla Decline | 16 |
| The Guerrillas Regain Momentum | 16 |
| Guerrilla Intentions and Implications for the United States | 17 |
| A Fall Offensive | 17 |
| Insurgent Strategy Beyond the US Election | 18 |

Appendixes

| | | |
|----|--|----|
| A. | The FMLN's Five and One-Half Factions | 21 |
| B. | Factionalism: A Chronic Problem | 25 |
| C. | FMLN Force Capabilities | 29 |
| D. | Guerrilla Weapons Inventory | 35 |
| E. | External Assistance: The Cuba-Nicaragua Pipeline | 37 |
| F. | Methodology for Tracking Guerrilla Performance | 43 |

Top Secret

BLANK PAGE

~~Top Secret~~

Scope Note

This assessment examines current guerrilla strengths and weaknesses and the likely course of insurgent activity and strategy over the next year or two. The paper does not systematically compare the performance of the guerrillas against the Salvadoran military, although it identifies tensions within, and between, the Salvadoran Government and the military as a key factor in projecting guerrilla prospects.

The Salvadoran military's strengths and shortcomings are explored more fully in a companion DI Intelligence Assessment ALA 84-10060 [redacted]

[redacted] June 1984, *The Salvadoran Military: A Mixed Performance*

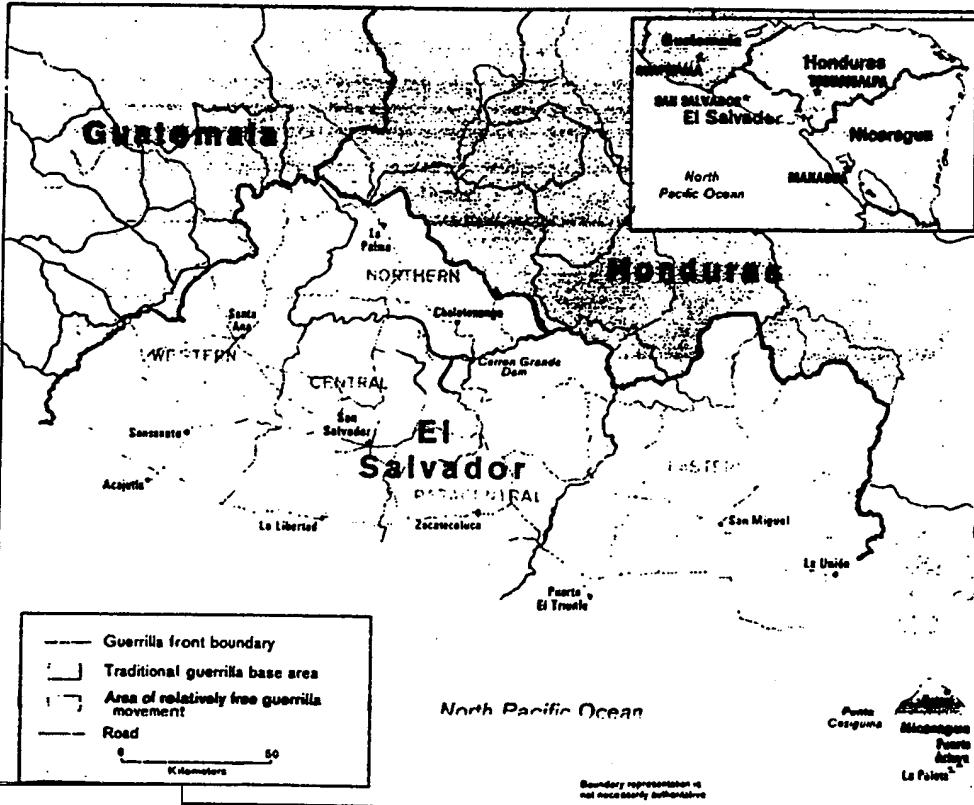
[redacted] A net assessment of the direction of the Salvadoran conflict is to appear in a forthcoming DI Intelligence Assessment.

[redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

Figure 1
Guerrilla Operating Areas



POOR QUALITY PAGE

Top Secret

Top Secret

El Salvador: Guerrilla Capabilities and Prospects Over the Next Two Years

Introduction

Since the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) was founded in 1980, the tactical initiative in the guerrilla war has shifted periodically from one side to the other. During the past year, however, problems within guerrilla ranks and the improved performance of the Salvadoran military have kept the guerrillas on the defensive.

FMLN leaders have had difficulty developing a cohesive, long-term strategy and coping with declining popular support, internal factionalism, and supply shortages. Nevertheless, the FMLN remains a formidable foe, and its top leaders recognize the need to launch another offensive to restore military credibility. This paper examines current insurgent capabilities, explores to what extent and under what conditions the military balance could shift in the next two years, and assesses the implications for the United States.

Shifting Guerrilla Strategy

The guerrillas have adopted four different approaches to the war, depending on their capabilities at the time and their expectations of success. From 1979 to 1981, the guerrillas conducted mostly isolated, uncoordinated attacks involving small numbers of fighters. At the same time, they worked to build a military organization and develop broad popular support, especially in the labor movement, the universities, and urban centers. This phase, which was aimed at inciting a Nicaragua-style insurrection, culminated in the unsuccessful "final offensive" in January 1981.

The second phase, which lasted until the March 1982 assembly election, took the war to the countryside. The number of people involved in guerrilla attack units grew from tens to often hundreds, and coordinated tactical planning became the rule.

many guerrilla leaders believed that by expanding the war in this way they could achieve sufficient momentum to shift the military and political balance decisively in their favor.

The Salvadoran military's success in foiling guerrilla efforts to disrupt the 1982 election, however, deflated insurgent morale and prospects. Apparently recognizing that Salvadoran military capabilities were improving and that popular support was insufficient to achieve a quick victory, the FMLN opted for a war of attrition—emphasizing attacks on the nation's economic fabric while seeking simultaneously to negotiate a power-sharing agreement. During this third phase, relatively low levels of US aid and political infighting at senior levels in the Salvadoran military and government worked to the guerrillas' advantage, and a stalemate resulted.

The fourth phase of guerrilla operations began with a major offensive in the fall of 1983. It was marked by increasingly larger and better coordinated operations by both sides. The FMLN attacked key strategic targets and large military units, such as the light infantry hunter battalions. This strategy brought the guerrillas two spectacular successes when on 30 December 1983 they destroyed a major bridge and overran a large military garrison.

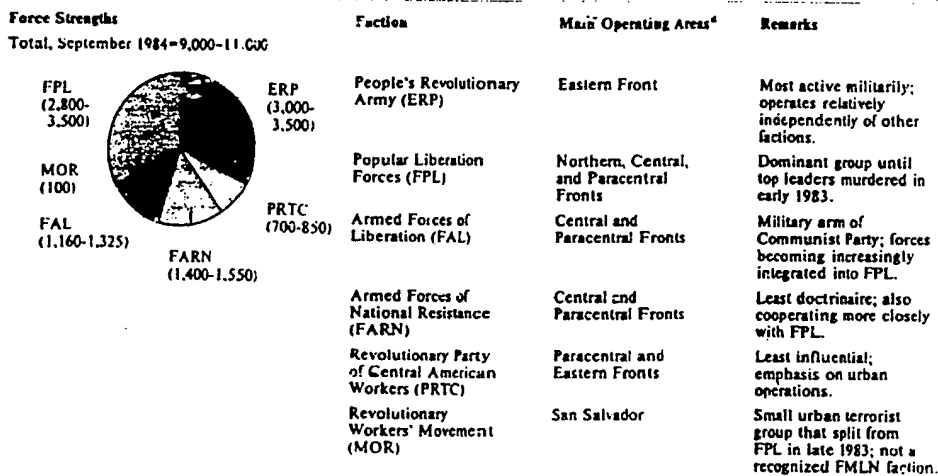
Insurgent hopes to build on these victories and regain momentum, however, were dashed in March and May of this year when the Salvadoran military kept the guerrillas from seriously disrupting the elections, enabling over 80 percent of the Salvadoran electorate to go to the polls.

that the guerrillas were unable to agree on a basic strategy for the elections campaign, and that they now are in search of a new strategic plan. Meanwhile, most insurgent leaders continue to stress the importance of concentrating their forces to attack key economic and military targets in order to undermine military morale and press the Duarte government to negotiate. Some also want to concentrate more heavily on the earlier strategy of establishing front groups among labor, students, and the masses, and promoting urban terrorism.

Top Secret

Top Secret

Figure 2
Components of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)



^a The five factions that comprise the FMLN are organized into five geographic fronts (see Figure 1).

(Figure 2) details the goals and objectives that reflect the four basic pillars of guerrilla strategy:

- **Intensification of the armed struggle.** Guerrilla forces need to be increased and strengthened, their areas of operations expanded, and the level of conflict raised.

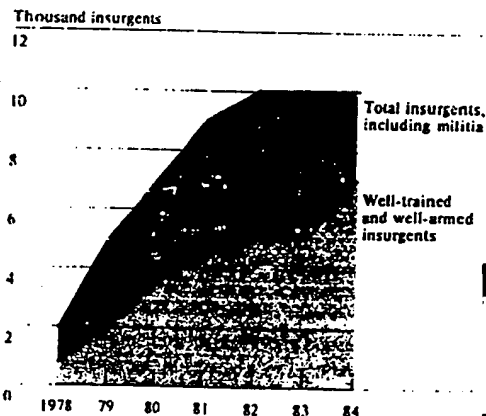
¹ An overview of each faction of the FMLN, including its historical roots, political orientation, military structure, and leadership is presented in appendix A.

- **Unity.** Coordination and cooperation among the five military factions must be improved, and the creation of a single Marxist-Leninist party with its own political front organization is a key task.
- **Development of Popular Support.** A broad social base must be developed, organized, and consolidated, focusing special attention on the "worker-farmer alliance" and the labor sector.
- **Diplomatic/Political Initiatives.** Ties to Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union should be strengthened, while diplomacy and propaganda should be used to break down the ranks of the enemy and discredit the US and Salvadoran Governments; negotiations and dialogue must be encouraged as a means of achieving power and reducing the chances of armed US intervention.

Top Secret

Top Secret

Figure 3
El Salvador: Guerrilla Force Levels,
1978 to 1984



Force Development and Capabilities

The total number of guerrilla and militia forces grew from about 2,000 in 1978 to some 10,000 in 1982 (figure 3).² Since then, force levels have remained fairly constant, totaling from 9,000 to 11,000 insurgents. However, the proportion of this force that is well-armed, well-trained, and combat-experienced has increased markedly. This rise is attributable mostly to the fuller integration of militia forces into combat units and the acquisition through capture and sustained infiltration in 1982 and 1983 of enough modern weapons—mostly automatic rifles—to arm all combatants.

_____ FMLN leaders were hoping to recruit as many as 4,500 additional guerrillas this year, but we believe force levels have not changed significantly. We estimate that the FMLN has impressed as many as 3,000

² Appendix B deals with factionalism among and within the guerrilla forces, and a detailed discussion of guerrilla capabilities and recent trends in force development appears in appendix C.

people—mostly youths—into their ranks in 1984, but that at least an equivalent number have defected, been captured, or died in combat.

_____ about 900 guerrillas defected in the first half of 1984 and over 1,250 guerrillas were killed between 1 January and 20 August. We believe that large numbers of insurgents also have deserted but not turned themselves over to Salvadoran authorities.

During the past five years, the FMLN has developed a highly mobile and well-ordered force structure. Despite harsh living conditions,

_____ most guerrillas continue to demonstrate great tenacity and an abiding commitment to the guerrilla struggle. Although there are occasional reports of poor treatment by unit commanders, guerrilla leaders in the field generally fight alongside and command the respect of their forces.

We judge the combat effectiveness of the guerrilla forces to be high. Tactical war-fighting doctrine appears sound and the flexibility and mobility of battlefield units allow them to be deployed efficiently. Increased Salvadoran military patrolling and sweep activity have kept the guerrillas off balance throughout much of this year, but the guerrillas still dictate the terms and pace of most tactical encounters and are able to avoid major engagements except at times and places of their choosing.

The guerrillas are well-armed with a variety of mostly Western-manufactured light-infantry and crew-served weapons.³ For example,

_____ in July 1984 about 70 percent of the FAR's 500 to 600 combatants in the Guazapa Front had M-16 rifles. Although the guerrillas have captured over 5,000 weapons since March 1982, the availability of weapons appears to differ among and within the FMLN factions.

³ A list of weapons known to be in the guerrilla arms inventory appears in appendix D.

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

[redacted] The lack of antiaircraft weapons also is a major problem, but in recent months [redacted] guerrillas have said that the FMLN would soon deploy SA-7 shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles to El Salvador.

[redacted] 1981, insurgent forces have captured over 100 PRC-77 radios—on which the Salvadoran military relies for its communications.

[redacted] Many Army units also have been infiltrated by the guerrillas.

[redacted] at least the major FMLN factions have developed fairly extensive training programs. Guerrillas continue to be sent to Nicaragua, Cuba, and other friendly countries for extensive training, and instruction is given in El Salvador at schools accommodating as many as 300 students. Within El Salvador, course length varies from three days to several months and subject matter ranges from basic literacy to instruction in artillery and demolition techniques.

Key Weaknesses and Vulnerabilities

Although the guerrillas have developed an imposing military capability over the past five years, their success to date and their prospects for further gains have been impaired by their lack of unity and their inability to develop a broad base of popular support. The FMLN's continuing dependence on Nicaragua and Cuba for ammunition, supplies, and other assistance is another potential vulnerability, especially in the wake of signs that began to appear in late 1983 that Nicaragua and Cuba might reduce future assistance.

Basic Needs

The lack of funds and basic necessities—such as medicine, food, shoes, and clothing—has posed serious problems for the guerrillas. The FMLN depends on local farmers and villagers as well as foreign sources including Nicaragua and Cuba for the bulk of these supplies. The insurgents cannot grow enough crops to feed their combatants, and much of what is smuggled across the Honduran border consists of food and other basic necessities. The insurgents often establish roadblocks on major highways to extort money, shoes, clothing, medicine, and food—sometimes taking only half of what is available and justifying their action as a “war tax.” Moreover, thefts from stores and pharmacies have increased sharply during the past year.

Popular Support

Most observers and the guerrillas themselves believe that low popular support for the insurgents is a critical problem.⁴ a political party representing the FMLN or acting as its front in a national election would attract only 5 to 10 percent of the vote.

⁴ Data and analysis for this section are derived in part from a forthcoming DI Intelligence Assessment on rural control in El Salvador that focuses on peasant attitudes toward the insurgency.

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

"many sympathizers" and only 9 percent that the guerrillas had "many sympathizers." When asked which group—the Army or the guerrillas—had been gaining sympathizers in recent months, 65 percent cited the Army and only 7 percent the guerrillas. In a similar poll conducted in September and October of 1983, 77 percent of the respondents said the Salvadoran people supported the Army in the war against the guerrillas; 14 percent said that Salvadorans do not care for either side; and 7 percent did not answer, presumably because most were guerrilla supporters.

The unpopularity of the guerrillas can be traced in part to the FMLN's inability to provide security and offer viable alternative economic and social services, as well as to the government's progress in implementing social programs and its growing commitment to democracy. More important, forced recruitment, attacks on farm cooperatives, constant guerrilla harassment, and the expropriation of foodstuffs and other basic necessities have hurt the guerrillas' image and alienated much of the population.

In a guerrilla document captured in March, a People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) commander noted that townspeople failed to respond to calls to join the revolution and complained openly that the insurgents were harming their lives, jobs, and property. Moreover, the document characterizes campesinos in areas under ERP "control" as too politically naive to understand how an FMLN victory would justify the deprivations they must suffer.

This problem was vividly illustrated in mid-1984 when according to press reports as many as 6,000 refugees fled northern Morazan, in some instances over guerrilla-mined roads, and crossed into Honduras. They sought help in returning to parts of El Salvador under government control and resisted resettlement in UNHCR refugee camps in Honduras where the inhabitants generally are believed to be sympathetic to the FMLN and

*The poll was sponsored by the Venezuelan Christian Democratic Party and approved by the Salvadoran Government. It was based on interviews conducted with 1,500 people in six departments designated as "nonconflict areas" and 500 people living in the capital cities of the remaining eight departments designated as "conflict areas."

The Church Speaks Out

The Catholic hierarchy—which over the past three years has judiciously balanced its criticism of abuses by the left and the right—has become increasingly outspoken in its condemnation of the guerrillas' forced recruitment drive and sabotage activities. In one of the more eloquent appeals made by senior Church officials in mid-1984, Bishop Rosa Chavez pleaded in his homily of 1 July for the return of hundreds of youths who remained in guerrilla encampments against their will, noting in particular the case of a boy who could go blind if he did not receive proper treatment for an eye disease.

The Bishop also said that, no matter how the guerrillas justified their acts of sabotage, "it is the people who suffer when the guerrillas down the electric pylons; it is the people who suffer when the guerrillas dynamite telephone installations, . . . kidnap, demand their famous war tax, or devote themselves to burning vehicles as they did recently. If they continue along that path, as they increase in military strength, the weaker they will be politically and will have even less space in the heart of the people. Therefore, I ask myself in whose favor are they really fighting?"

The guerrillas, in a response broadcast on Radio Venceremos, labeled the Bishop a "reactionary and partial" man "who wants to sit at the table of both the rich and the poor, and that is not possible."

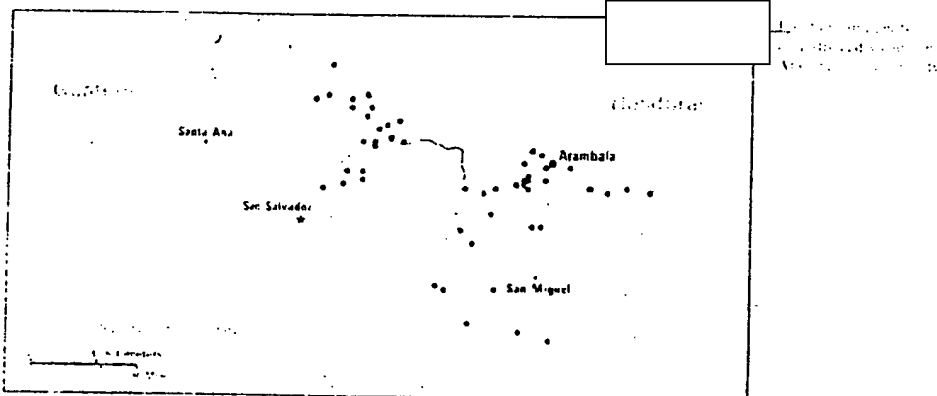
where some guerrilla reprisals have taken place. The refugees said they fled primarily to escape forced recruitment into guerrilla ranks, but they also complained of growing insurgent demands and the confiscation of village food supplies. An FMLN propaganda campaign urging peasants to remain on their land and not leave their native villages apparently had little effect.

Popular support for the guerrillas has been eroded by other FMLN practices, such as the use of roadblocks to collect war taxes, obtaining protection money from

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

Figure 4
El Salvador: Municipalities Where Voting Did Not
Take Place on May 6, 1984



~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

commercial farmers and sugar mill owners, and recent attacks on farm cooperatives. The kidnaping of civilians, including the Defense Minister's brother in June, appears to be on the rise again despite public statements by the FMLN that it would not attack the relatives of foes. Moreover, the sharp increase in forced recruitment, including many schoolchildren, probably has done serious and lasting damage to the guerrilla cause.

National elections in March 1982 and the spring of 1984 have helped build popular support for the government. Despite insurgent appeals to boycott the "imperialist farce," the turnout in both elections exceeded 80 percent, and guerrilla efforts to sabotage the elections generally proved counterproductive. In San Miguel Department—a traditional guerrilla stronghold in eastern El Salvador—the turnout in the May runoff balloting was 15 percent higher than in the March election despite guerrilla attacks in the interim that were designed to inhibit the voting.

Voting patterns in the 1984 elections, however, demonstrate the insurgents' impact in more isolated rural areas. On 6 May, the government did not conduct balloting in 53 out of 261 municipalities; most of these towns were in longstanding guerrilla strongholds in Chalatenango, Morazan, San Miguel, and La Unión Departments (figure 4). Nonetheless, the fact that 20 percent of the municipalities did not vote is potentially misleading because most of the areas where little voting occurred are mountainous and sparsely populated. In Morazan and Chalatenango Departments—where 36 municipalities did not vote—numerous destroyed and abandoned villages. Moreover, in 10 locations voters were allowed to cast ballots in other towns not under guerrilla control.

The agrarian reform program, launched in March 1980, also has hurt the guerrillas and helped improve the government's image. Approximately 22 percent of the country's farmland has been handed over to private farmers and members of cooperatives, and so far about 570,000 Salvadorans—including family members—have benefited. Nevertheless, recent interviews with refugees from all 14 departments reveal that few were aware of specific details of the land reform program, suggesting that a more effective communications effort might gain the government increased support.

The government's National Plan to rebuild San Vicente and Usulután—two agriculturally important departments—and to win "the hearts and minds of the people" has had mixed success.

many civilians appear enthusiastic to take up arms to protect their villages once the guerrillas are driven away, but chronic weapons shortages and the Army's inability to provide adequate support often have forced them to remain neutral, if only to survive. Less than 15 percent of local civilian security personnel now carry rifles. A new government civil defense program should help, but weapons shortages are constraining this effort as well.

Factionalism

Fundamental differences in policy and strategy and personal rivalries have beset the FMLN from the start and continue to impede its political and military effectiveness.⁴ Differences among the five factions center on the most fundamental issue: the purpose and conduct of the armed struggle. The FPL faction, for example, has consistently advocated a strategy of "prolonged popular war" that emphasizes the gradual development of popular support and a prolonged war of attrition. The ERP and the FARN, on the other hand, generally adhere to the line that frequent armed attacks will incite the masses to overthrow the government.

Differences over negotiating strategy also are common and criticism of other factions frequently is reported within the guerrilla ranks.

The ERP and its leader, Joaquin Villalobos, often are faulted by other guerrilla commanders for being ruthless, opportunistic, and bellicose. The FPL is criticized by other guerrilla factions as too ideological, and the FARN as too willing to negotiate and too nationalistic. Some FMLN leaders also are reported to have dismissed the PRTC as no more than terrorists and the FAL as lackeys of Moscow and Havana.

⁴ Additional information on the current tensions among and within the factions, efforts to improve tactical military coordination, and external pressures to forge greater unity in guerrilla ranks appear in appendix B.

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

Antagonisms have emerged within most guerrilla factions as well.

[redacted] during the past year serious tensions have developed between the rank and file and the senior leadership of both the PRTC and the FARN. Evidence of a far more serious rift within FPL ranks surfaced publicly in April 1983 when deputy commander Melida Anaya Montes, known as "Ana Maria," was murdered by followers of top commander Salvador Cayetano Carpio, who then allegedly committed suicide. Carpio's successor, Leonel Gonzalez, has since moved the FPL toward increased military coordination and political cooperation with other factions and has adopted a more flexible attitude on negotiations. This led several of Carpio's hardline supporters in late 1983 to form a splinter group—the Revolutionary Workers' Movement (MOR)—which has conducted a number of sabotage and terrorist acts, mostly in San Salvador.

[redacted] leaders of the guerrilla factions have met in El Salvador on several occasions during the past year to resolve differences and to

improve tactical military coordination. These meetings were encouraged by the guerrillas' foreign supporters—particularly the Cubans.

[redacted]

Since last year, some progress has been made, although the ERP continues to operate relatively independently. Major strides in coordinating tactical military operations have been made by the FPL and the FAL. Their success in conducting more joint operations in northern and western El Salvador has allowed them to mass forces for larger operations against important strategic targets such as the Fourth Brigade headquarters in Chalatenango Department. The FARN has developed a communications network with the FPL to facilitate joint operations in the west, but

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

it has had less success working with the ERP. The FPL and the FAL also have had difficulty coordinating operations with the ERP.

The PRTC has worked with the ERP in logistics-related activities in the east, but there was little evidence of PRTC involvement in joint military operations with other factions until this summer.

Foreign Assistance

Although Cuba, Nicaragua, and other foreign supporters continue to provide arms, ammunition, training, funds, and other assistance to the Salvadoran guerrillas, during the past year their relations with the FMLN have been affected by concerns over a potential increased US role in the region.⁷ Following the US action in Grenada last fall and the growing threat posed by anti-Sandinista forces to the Nicaraguan regime, Cuban officials informed FMLN leaders,

that assistance would be reduced because greater resources were needed to ensure the survival of the Sandinistas. On at least two occasions during the past year, the Nicaraguans threatened to place major restrictions on the FMLN.

We believe such actions may have been motivated in part by concern in Havana and Managua that the United States would cite continuing Sandinista support to the Salvadorans as justification to invade Nicaragua or El Salvador.

such pressures have led FMLN leaders to move some of their political and propaganda operatives out of Nicaragua, and on at least one occasion they have talked about seeking alternate sources of supply. The guerrillas almost certainly are concerned that the Cubans and the

⁷ Additional information on Nicaraguan, Cuban, and other foreign assistance efforts; guerrilla arms acquisitions and losses; and infiltration routes appear in appendix E.

Nicaraguans might restrict assistance, but we have no other information suggesting that they are preparing for such a possibility.

Arms and Ammunition. The insurgents remain heavily dependent on Havana and Managua for ammunition and other supplies. Based on insurgent arms acquisitions and losses as well as logistic activity, we estimate that roughly three-fourths of guerrilla ammunition needs and substantial amounts of basic necessities are met by external supply. Between May 1982 and June 1983, it appears that the FMLN infiltrated about as many arms as it captured, but since then

the guerrillas have infiltrated far fewer weapons than they have captured.

We believe the substantial drop in the flow of infiltrated weapons since mid-1983 reflects both a reduced insurgent need for additional weapons following a substantial influx of arms in 1982 and 1983 as well as guerrilla success in capturing over 5,000 individual and crew-served weapons from the Salvadoran military mostly during those same years.

⁸ Data for these estimates result from an interagency conference on weapons to Salvadoran guerrillas held in August 1984 and sponsored by the Central America Joint Intelligence Team (CAJIT) in the Department of Defense. Attending the conference were representatives from CAJIT; DIA; CIA; NSA; the US Southern Command, Panama; the Defense Attache's Office, San Salvador; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; and the US Army Armament, Munitions, and Chemical Command, Rock Island, Illinois.

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

Training. Nicaragua and Cuba continue to play a major role in training Salvadoran insurgents, despite the presence of numerous training facilities in El Salvador.

hundreds if not thousands of guerrillas have received basic training in Nicaragua this year, and small numbers have attended more advanced courses in Cuba, Nicaragua, and other friendly countries.

Financing. Although information on guerrilla financing is sketchy, we believe the FMLN obtains much of its funding from foreign countries and humanitarian organizations. In recent months,

a steady decrease in financial assistance received from West European sources and international organizations.

European donors have cited the insurgents' use of funds earmarked for humanitarian purposes to purchase arms and the misappropriation of sizable amounts of money by individual FMLN members as reasons for reducing aid. As a result,

FMLN finances have suffered badly.

Advisers.

Individuals and small units from every Central American country, Mexico, North and South America, Cuba, and the Caribbean have served as combatants and support personnel with the guerrillas in El Salvador at one time or another during the past four years. For example,

four members of a dissident faction of the Guatemalan Communist Party who were captured crossing the border last January said that they and 16 members of their group had been fighting with the FPL in the Guazapa area. West Europeans also have served with the guerrillas in medical and other capacities. Such involvement was dramatically underscored in June when a Spanish doctor was killed in a firefight near a refugee camp in Honduras. The doctor had worked as a volunteer in a Honduran refugee camp for a few months before joining the guerrillas in June 1983. During the past year, unconfirmed reports of foreigners also serving as

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

instructors, squad leaders, and even camp commanders have appeared [redacted]

The Performance Record

An analysis of guerrilla-initiated actions from January 1981 through June 1984 illuminates several basic trends in guerrilla strategy and capabilities. The overall level of insurgent activity peaked in early 1982 at the time of the national election. Since then it has remained fairly steady at a reduced level, reflecting both the guerrillas' underlying strengths and weaknesses. Guerrilla actions against civilian targets have increased, but the number of attacks against military targets has not—suggesting that insurgent unity and supply shortages as well as more aggressive Army tactics continue to inhibit military progress. [redacted]

We have sought to measure basic guerrilla military behavior by counting the number of attacks the guerrillas have launched against stationary targets each week since January 1981. Common targets include military facilities and guardposts, towns, bridges, and public buildings—especially utilities. The data, compiled by the Central America Joint Intelligence Team (CAJIT) in the Department of Defense, show that the number of military attacks escalated dramatically during the 1982 election campaign but since has fallen to a lower level (figure 5, Military Attacks).^{*} Almost 80 attacks were registered in the week before the March 1982 election, but the highest number reported in any given week during the spring 1984 elections was 20. The number of guerrilla ambushes—defined as attacks against moving targets—shows a similar pattern, with a major surge in early 1982 and a lower level of activity since then (figure 5, Ambush Incidents). [redacted]

Some observers have attributed the lack of an appreciable upward trend in military attacks and ambushes since 1982 to an FMLN decision to conduct fewer small-scale actions and create larger military units to attack important military and strategic targets. We believe the guerrillas hoped—unrealistically, as it

turned out—that such a strategy would undermine the morale of the Salvadoran military and the population as a whole. Since January 1982, however, the number of major military attacks—involving company-sized guerrilla units consisting of 120 or more combatants—has never exceeded eight in one week, and the average number of major military attacks, as distinct from total military actions, for the first half of 1984 is lower than that in 1983 (figure 5, Major Military Attacks). Some of this decline may reflect frictions and supply problems within guerrilla ranks, but most of it probably is due to the Salvadoran military's growing ability to take the war to the insurgents, especially in eastern El Salvador. By frequently sweeping traditional base areas and supply corridors, the military has kept the guerrillas off balance and made it increasingly difficult for them to gather the supplies and forces needed to launch major attacks. [redacted]

Evidence of a change in guerrilla strategy is suggested by a comparison of the number of insurgent actions aimed at civilian targets with actions directed at military targets (figure 6). In 1981, the number of incidents involving civilian targets—such as robberies, kidnappings, assassinations, sabotage, and road blocks—roughly equaled that involving military targets. Beginning in 1982, however, the number of incidents against civilians soared. During the March 1982 election campaign two-thirds of all incidents were against civilians and even higher civilian rates prevailed during the March 1984 election campaign. [redacted]

The trend in kidnappings and robberies is even more striking (figure 5, Kidnaping and Robbery Incidents). The dramatic increase in kidnappings in 1984 reflects growing guerrilla reliance on forced recruitment as well as efforts to obtain ransom and impress farmers and villagers to transport guerrilla supplies and casualties. The number of robberies—mostly involving the theft of clothes, shoes, and medicine from local stores and pharmacies—has also surged, indicating that guerrilla supply problems are becoming increasingly severe. [redacted]

^{*} Details on the data base, definitions, and methodology used in preparing these graphs appear in appendix F. [redacted]

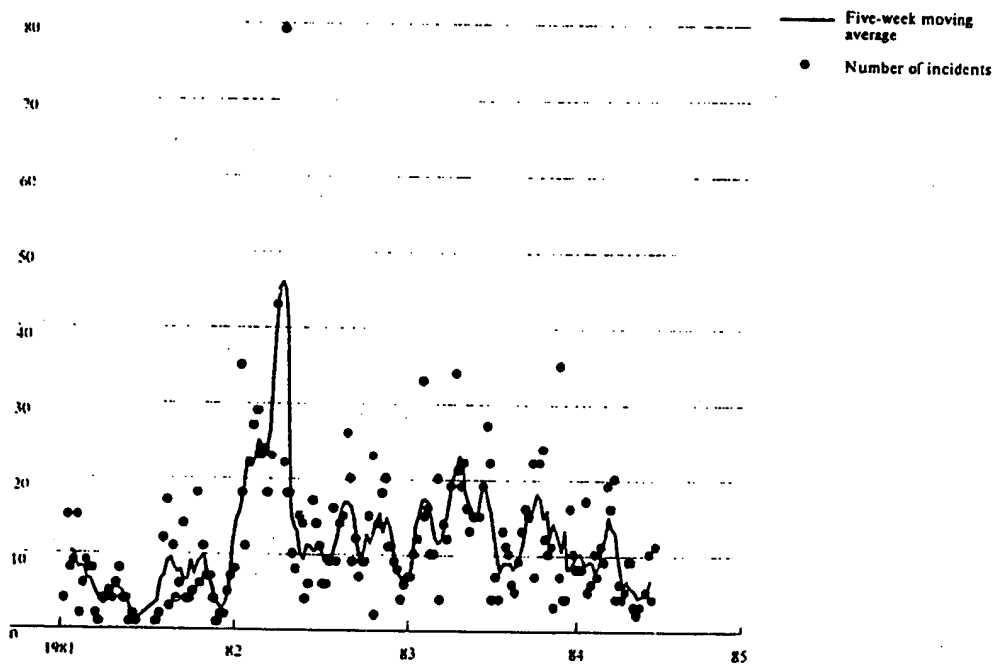
Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

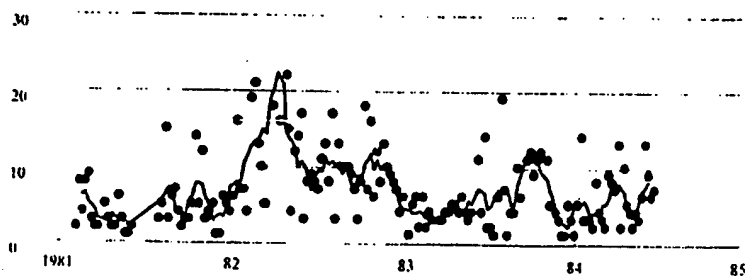
Figure 5
El Salvador: Guerrilla-Initiated Incidents,
January 1981 to July 1984

Number of incidents per week

Military Attacks



Ambush Incidents

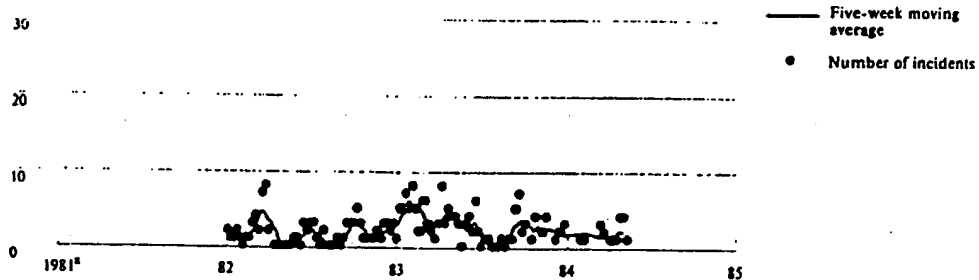


~~Top Secret~~

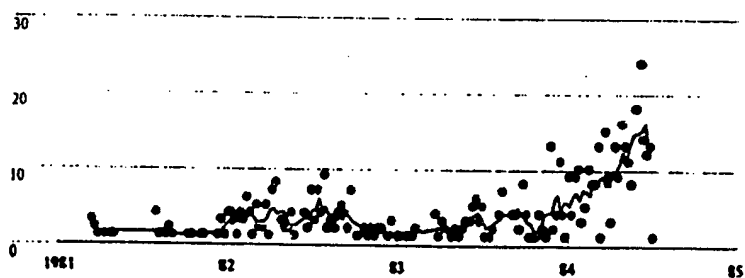
~~Top Secret~~

Figure 5 (continued)

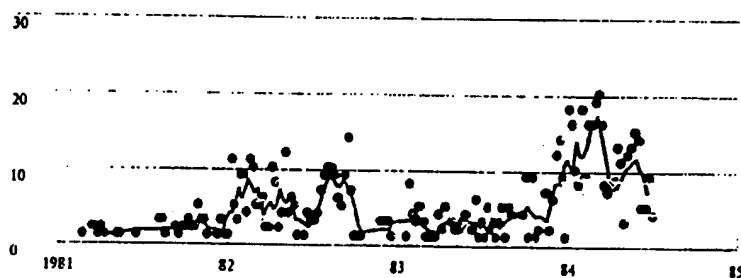
Number of incidents per week
Major Military Attacks



Kidnaping Incidents



Robbery Incidents



^a No data available for 1981.

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

Figure 6
El Salvador: Guerrilla Actions Against Military and Civilian Targets, January 1981 to July 1984

Number of incidents per quarter

■ Military ■ Civilian

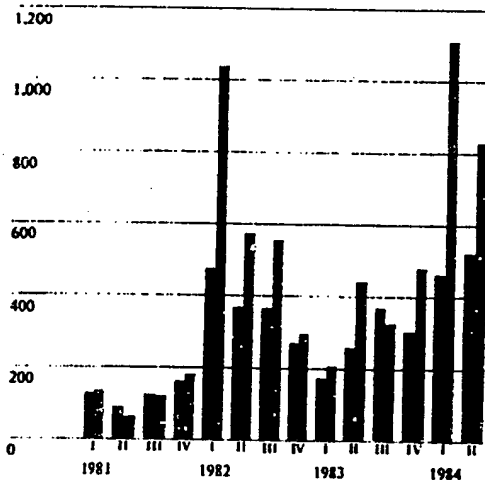
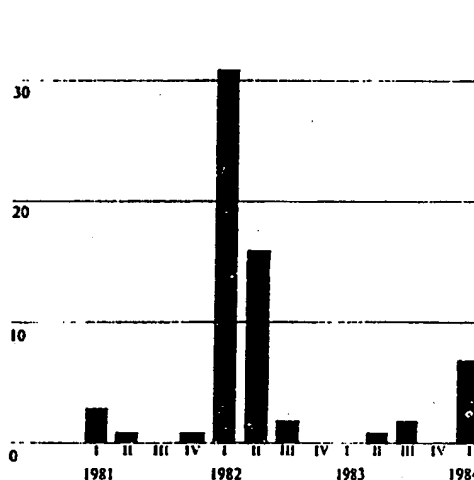


Figure 7
El Salvador: Guerrilla Assassination Incidents, January 1981 to July 1984

Number of incidents per quarter

40



The data on guerrilla killings for political purposes also appear to reflect basic shifts in insurgent strategy (figure 7). In the first quarter of 1982, 31 incidents were recorded involving the murder of national legislators, mayors, military officers, and other security force personnel. At that time the guerrillas still were emphasizing urban warfare, and the resurgence of killings of prominent individuals in early 1984 suggests a possible return to this strategy. The small number of such murders in the intervening period might also reflect the government's success in uprooting much of the FMLN's urban apparatus as well as the elimination of thousands of leftist sympathizers and potential assassins by rightwing death squads.

Projecting Near-Term Capabilities

In assessing insurgent capabilities and prospects over the next year or two, four major variables stand out: popular support, external assistance, guerrilla unity, and the performance of the Salvadoran military and government:

- Popular support will continue to be critical because it directly affects the FMLN's ability to recruit and retain combatants, provision its forces, and bring pressure on the government.

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

- Foreign assistance levels will determine whether the guerrillas have enough ammunition, sufficient weapons to equip additional forces, and a political and propaganda apparatus that portrays the guerrillas in the best light at home and abroad.
- How the insurgents deal with factionalism in their ranks will affect their ability to coordinate military operations and formulate an attractive political program as well as a coherent, long-term military strategy.
- The guerrillas' prospects will continue to turn on whether the Salvadoran Government and military avoid political infighting, control death squad activity, and keep their attention focused on winning the war. (S NF)

Most Likely Outcome

Taking the guerrillas' current overall strengths and weaknesses into account, we believe insurgent force strength is likely to drop by 1,000 to 3,000 over the next two years, especially if the Duarte government implements an effective amnesty program. Most defections probably will come from the ranks of those recently recruited.

We judge desertions will continue largely because insurgent leaders can offer few inducements to their fighters.

FMLN commanders increasingly are threatening to take reprisals against the guerrillas and their families if they desert.

We judge, nonetheless, that the guerrillas' overall force capabilities are unlikely to diminish significantly. The FMLN probably will be able to capture or infiltrate all of the arms it needs, and

more sophisticated weapons, such as SA-7 shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles, may be introduced shortly. If this system proves effective against El Salvador's small Air Force, the government's ability to redeploy forces, reinforce units, and evacuate wounded will be seriously impaired. The FMLN would continue to depend on

foreign suppliers for ammunition and basic necessities, but, even with attrition of some forces, shortages of such supplies probably would affect the pace more than the intensity of the fighting.

The FMLN will continue, in our view, to operate from all of its traditional base areas, maintaining its strongest presence along the Honduran border.

emphasis on urban operations and terrorism will be renewed and that military activity might pick up in western El Salvador, if only to relieve pressure on guerrilla forces and supply corridors elsewhere in the country. To the extent that government sweeps and interdiction efforts complicate resupply efforts, the guerrillas will have to give more attention to conserving resources. FMLN leaders probably will become more selective in choosing targets to attack and more cautious in mapping out basic strategy.

Ideological differences and rivalries are likely to continue hampering interfactional cooperation. Although the FAL and the FPL—and to a lesser extent the FARN and the PRTC—are moving toward more integrated military operations, the ERP probably will continue as in the past to operate relatively independently of the other factions. Efforts by the Duarte government to engage the FMLN in a dialogue or to entice some of its members into the legitimate political process probably would exacerbate internal frictions and further complicate efforts to improve tactical coordination.

Considering their growing concerns, guerrilla leaders probably will increasingly emphasize the need to strengthen popular support, but their prospects for much success are dim largely because they are working from such a small base of supporters. The insurgents might make significant inroads in some labor unions and peasant organizations, however, especially if the Duarte administration adopts more confrontational tactics in response to growing labor demands.

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

Substantial Guerrilla Decline

Even if circumstances are substantially worse for the guerrillas and defections jump significantly, we believe insurgent force strengths would not drop below 6,000 in the next two years. Substantial defections could occur if the insurgents were unable to launch a credible fall offensive and it became increasingly apparent that the FMLN no longer was capable of winning the war. Additional guerrillas also might be tempted to leave if a new and better publicized amnesty program was coupled with the development of a legitimate left willing and able to participate in municipal and legislative elections scheduled in 1985 or to prepare for such elections in 1988. Those who chose to reenter legitimate political life probably would become major targets of the extreme right or left, just as those who were associated with the reformist government in 1979 were targets of far right violence.

Nonetheless, we doubt that any top FMLN leaders would defect. A hard core of well-armed, combat-experienced insurgents also would remain, determined to continue the struggle over the foreseeable future. About 6,000 insurgents now have been in the field for two years or more, and they seem likely to persist even under extremely adverse circumstances.

With such reduced force levels, we believe the FMLN might lose some of its traditional base areas but would retain a dominant position in strongholds along the Honduran border. Base areas in western El Salvador and in the Guazapa region might be more vulnerable, especially if large numbers of guerrillas from the less doctrinaire FAL or FARN defected. Guerrilla strongholds in southeastern El Salvador also might come under increased pressure, particularly if the Salvadoran military intensified efforts to interdict seaborne infiltration across the Gulf of Fonseca.

More aggressive operations by the Salvadoran military would make insurgent base areas throughout the country less secure, thereby complicating guerrilla supply efforts. The need for weapons and basic necessities might pose less of a problem than at present because fewer guerrillas would have to be armed, fed, and clothed. Nevertheless, the guerrillas would be operating out of sparsely populated areas, making it more difficult for them to acquire goods and supplies locally.

If the guerrillas saw their situation steadily deteriorating, some leaders—particularly those within the ERP—might be tempted to push a “go-for-broke” strategy or try to establish a liberated zone in the east. Such a strategy would give the movement a temporary psychological boost and help restore insurgent credibility at home and abroad. The military risk, however, would be severe as the preponderance of their forces could be lost in the fighting. A more likely guerrilla response would be to place even greater emphasis on urban terrorism, particularly assassination efforts aimed at senior Salvadoran officials and US personnel.

A more fruitful strategy for the guerrillas would be to continue the war at a reduced pace while attempting over a period of years to rebuild a popular and political base, resolve internal unity problems, and restore their standing in the international community. In such circumstances, Havana and Managua might moderate their assistance until the guerrillas completed their retrenchment and could seriously challenge the government.

The Guerrillas Regain Momentum

Should trends unexpectedly favor the guerrillas and they begin to work together more closely, we believe the FMLN still would be unlikely to add more than 2,000 combatants to its ranks in the next two years. The FMLN would need more time to develop a substantial popular base, and a major force expansion would add to logistic problems. Although the guerrillas probably have, or could acquire, enough weapons to arm several thousand additional fighters, they would have to rely increasingly on infiltration or robbery and extortion to obtain additional ammunition and supplies. As a result, popular support would be further eroded, making recruitment even more difficult.

We believe a resurgent guerrilla force would first seek to consolidate its position in eastern El Salvador. Because the guerrillas already are well-entrenched in parts of Usulután, San Miguel, and Morazan Departments, further consolidation in the east would allow

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

the FMLN to secure several of its primary infiltration routes. The guerrillas might be able to close portions of the Pan American Highway. This not only would facilitate infiltration efforts but deal a major psychological and economic blow to the Salvadoran Government—much in the same way Angolan rebels have ravaged the Luanda regime by shutting down the Benguela Railroad. [redacted]

Guerrilla activity in urban areas and western parts of the country would grow in our view, affecting even the most western Departments. [redacted]

[redacted] insurgent strategy would be to spread the government forces out, draw them away from the east, and demonstrate that the guerrilla struggle is a nationwide effort. Base areas and more extensive resupply corridors probably would be developed in western Chalatenango and Santa Ana Departments to support such operations as well as new infiltration routes along the western coast of El Salvador. We believe the guerrillas would try to infiltrate a growing proportion of arms and equipment by sea and air because of the relative slowness of overland deliveries. [redacted]

Despite what would be their growing strength, we believe many guerrilla leaders would remain reluctant to declare a liberated zone. Such a declaration would give the guerrillas a propaganda boost, but they would be taking a major military risk by consolidating their forces and requiring them to defend territory. Moreover, a liberated zone would be feasible only in northeastern El Salvador where the ERP is dominant, and the leaders of most other factions would want to avoid any action that tended to increase the ERP's standing within the alliance. [redacted]

If the FMLN regained momentum, we judge its foreign supporters almost certainly would try to accelerate shipments of arms and equipment and establish new supply routes in an effort to consolidate insurgent advances and propel the FMLN toward a final victory. Even then, the guerrillas probably would not emerge victorious over the Duarte government in the

"The Benguela Railroad, which bisects Angola, had great economic and symbolic importance in that it was an integral part of the regional transportation system and a key foreign exchange earner for the Luanda government. [redacted]"

next year or two largely because they would be working from a relatively small popular base. Moreover, as in the past, internal frictions most likely would persist or intensify with any improvement in guerrilla prospects. Under these circumstances, we doubt a guerrilla force with as many as 13,000 combatants could overwhelm a Salvadoran military more than three times its size. The FMLN would be able to achieve power only in the event that the political system collapsed and the Salvadoran military fell into disarray. [redacted]

Guerrilla Intentions and Implications for the United States

A Fall Offensive

A number of reports—[redacted] indicate that since early this year the guerrillas have been preparing a major offensive for the summer or fall of 1984 to restore their military credibility and to undercut the Reagan administration's electoral prospects in November. The Cubans appear to have been especially active in urging and planning this strategy, but [redacted]

[redacted] some guerrilla leaders may have resisted a summer campaign because of shortages of supplies and trained manpower. Guerrilla leaders, [redacted]

[redacted] also were concerned that a major offensive would give the US Government an excuse to intervene directly or the justification it needed to convince the US Congress to approve a large military and economic assistance program for El Salvador. [redacted]

[redacted] leaders of the FMLN and its overt political arm, the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), decided last May to launch simultaneous campaigns urging peace negotiations and increasing military operations that would culminate in October. Their program called for:

- A series of "sustainable" military actions that would demonstrate the weakness of the Salvadoran military and the futility of US military assistance.

Top Secret

Top Secret

- An emphasis on ambushes, harassment, and the mining of roads, recognizing that they were unlikely to win a large-scale battle. The struggle was to be carried into regions that had been relatively unaffected by the war, including San Salvador and western El Salvador.

- Workers, students, and the "masses" to foment strikes and demonstrations against the Duarte government.
- The strengthening of relations with labor, the church, and unspecified military groups.
- The use of international propaganda to improve the image of the FMLN and to encourage public opposition in the United States to a US invasion.

The FMLN, in our view, can and will intensify military activity in the next month or so, most likely by mounting swift, intensive operations against highly visible, strategic targets such as dams, bridges, airfields, oil refineries, port complexes, or departmental capitals. At the same time, we believe efforts to harass transport routes, impede the harvest, and increase urban terrorism will continue. Nonetheless, we judge that the guerrillas are incapable of sustaining a nationwide offensive that could substantially alter the military balance. The Salvadoran military's continued sweeps, especially east of the Lempa River, have disrupted the guerrillas' resupply activity this summer and [redacted] probably will continue to hamper guerrilla operations.

Insurgent Strategy Beyond the US Election

Guerrilla strategy over the next year or two will be influenced strongly by the outcome of the US Presidential election in November.

[redacted] many guerrilla leaders would interpret a Reagan administration victory as a prelude to a US invasion of El Salvador. [redacted] as early as December 1983 FDR and FMLN leaders believed

that President Reagan would launch an invasion soon after he won reelection. They believed it would involve cross-border incursions by Guatemalan and Honduran forces and the introduction of US forces in relatively secure areas along the coast such as Sonsonate, Zacatecoluca, and La Unión.

If President Reagan is reelected, the FMLN probably will continue to pursue a two-track policy, maintaining military pressure on the Salvadoran Government while seeking to engage the Duarte government in a dialogue—primarily as a ploy to gain time in order to rebuild popular support, develop stronger ties to labor and peasant organizations, and strengthen their military position. We believe FMLN leaders would consider their chances of winning a total military victory to be minimal but would seek to ensure that they would be in a position to seize power in the event that serious conflicts within the Salvadoran Government or military threatened a collapse.

We judge that FMLN leaders would view continuing US military and economic assistance to El Salvador as a key obstacle to their winning the war. As a result, they would be likely to give at least as much attention to undercutting US public and Congressional support for the Duarte government.

Should President Reagan lose the election, we believe the FMLN would pursue the negotiating track much more vigorously, while preparing to step up military activity after the new administration is in place. We judge the FMLN would push hard to engage the new administration and the Salvadoran Government in serious negotiations in the hope this would open the door to a power-sharing arrangement. Moreover, insurgent leaders almost certainly would expect the

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

initiation of talks to enhance their credibility internationally, complicate Washington's relations with the Salvadoran Government, and create serious problems for Duarte in his dealings with the military and conservative business sectors. [redacted]

FMLN leaders probably would not increase the fighting in late 1984, in our view, out of fear this might provoke the outgoing administration to escalate US involvement in the struggle. Nevertheless, we judge the military struggle would receive greater emphasis if it appeared the new administration in Washington was unwilling to make meaningful concessions on the negotiating front. By stepping up the fighting, the guerrillas would hope to demonstrate the costs and futility of continuing US support to the Duarte government. Moreover, from the guerrillas' perspective, increased military activity would generate more pressure for negotiations and help prepare the way for an eventual military victory. [redacted]

Regardless of who wins the US election, guerrilla prospects are likely to continue to wax and wane in tandem with the capability of the Salvadoran Government and military. When the Salvadoran military has lost the initiative in the past and political infighting has broken out among senior officers, the guerrillas traditionally have responded by holding back to see who would come out on top and how the military and political balance would be affected. The guerrillas also may have refrained from escalating the fighting because they believed this would inspire the military to put aside its differences and focus on the war. [redacted]

When the military has gone on the offensive, the guerrillas usually have tried to meet the challenge, striking back in order to show their foreign supporters and the Salvadoran armed forces that they cannot be easily vanquished. Since January, however, the Salvadoran military has kept the guerrillas off balance throughout much of the country and disrupted their supply networks. If the military can maintain the tactical initiative, keep the insurgents on the move, and reduce the flow of infiltrated weapons, ammunition, and supplies, we judge the FMLN's ability to rebound will be severely inhibited. [redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

BLANK PAGE

Top Secret

Appendix A

The FMLN's Five and One-Half Factions

The People's Revolutionary Army (ERP)

The ERP was founded in 1972 as an urban terrorist organization made up largely of radical Marxist students and some Christian socialists bent on violence. The ERP, led by Joaquin Villalobos, is the largest and most aggressive of the guerrilla groups and often functions in the role of military tactician for the alliance. []

The ERP is an opportunistic organization with shallow ideological roots. Although in 1977 it created the Salvadoran Revolutionary Party (PRS) and a front group, the Popular Leagues of 28 February (LP-28), the ERP has paid far less attention to political organization and propagandizing than the military aspects of the struggle. []

The ERP, with an estimated strength of 3,000 to 3,500 combatants, was the first guerrilla faction to establish large, conventional size units in an effort to regularize command and control and give the guerrillas a counterbalance to the government's immediate reaction battalions. In early 1983, ERP commanders formed the Rafael Antonio Arce Zablah Brigade (BRAZ) from guerrilla columns and security units that had been subordinate to various ERP war fronts. In the fall of 1983, the BRAZ split into a northern and southern command, and as of March 1984 it had an overall structure consisting of six infantry battalions with some 450 combatants each, a special forces unit with about 250 combatants, and a support weapons battalion with some 150 personnel. []

Radio Venceremos, a clandestine radio station that usually transmits from northern Morazan Department, is operated by the ERP. []

Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces (FPL)

The FPL was founded in 1970 when Salvador Cayetano Carpio broke with the Communist Party of El Salvador because, in his view, it did not give sufficient emphasis to the armed struggle. It began as an urban terrorist group and evolved into a predominantly rural guerrilla movement. []

Under Carpio's leadership, the FPL was the largest and most prestigious of the guerrilla groups. The military arm of the FPL is often referred to as the Popular Armed Forces of Liberation (FAPL). Its associated mass organization, the Popular Revolutionary Bloc (BPR), was founded in 1975. []

Following the death of Carpio and his deputy in the spring of 1983, a more conciliatory leadership took power. The FPL's new chief, Leonel Gonzalez, had spent much of his time at FPL headquarters in Nicaragua where he coordinated logistic, political, and military activities. His deputy, Dimas Rodriguez, previously commanded the FPL's northern front. []

Gonzalez and Rodriguez restructured the FAPL in order to improve combat capabilities and to facilitate coordination with other factions. As of July 1984 at least four infantry battalions had been formed, consisting of some 400 combatants and 100 support personnel each. These battalions comprise the Felipe Pena Mendoza Brigade which operates in the Central and Paracentral Fronts. Special intelligence indicates the existence of about 800 additional combatants, bringing estimated total force levels to 2,800 to 3,500. Although much of their current military structure is unknown, some of these combatants are being formed into special military units that will be used for reconnaissance, ambush operations, and to penetrate major military installations. []

The FPL broadcasts clandestinely over Radio Farabundo Marti, which usually is based in Las Vueltas, Chalatenango Department. []

The Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN)

The FARN and its party organization, the National Resistance (RN), were established in 1975 by a dissident group that split from the ERP after their leader, noted poet and former Communist Party

Top Secret

Top Secret

member Roque Dalton, was murdered by ERP militants. The dissidents opposed the ERP's emphasis on terrorism and its failure to organize the masses.

In 1975 the FARN affiliated itself with the already existing United Popular Action Front (FAPU), which is now the FARN front organization. FAPU, which was created in 1974, was the second largest Marxist front organization at that time.

Ferman Cienfuegos became head of the FARN and the RN in September 1980 when his predecessor reportedly was killed in a plane crash in Panama. Some believe that his death also occurred under suspicious circumstances. Under Cienfuegos' direction, the FARN has gained the reputation in El Salvador and internationally as the least doctrinaire and most nationalistic of the five factions.

The FARN, which now has an estimated 1,400 to 1,550 combatants, was the last of the factions to restructure its combat forces, creating at least two battalions or "columns" in 1983. One is located in the Central Front, where it conducts operations with the

FPL's Felipe Pena Mendoza Brigade, and the other normally is garrisoned in southeastern El Salvador, where it operates with the ERP's BRAZ Brigade.

The Armed Forces of Liberation (FAL)

The FAL is the military arm of the Moscow-supported Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES). The party was founded in 1930 and exerts substantial influence over its military counterpart. The Communist Party's front organization, the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN), was founded in 1968, and the FAL was established in 1979 after the party decided to join the insurgency.

Shafik Handal has been general secretary of the party since the early 1970s and now helps direct the guerrilla movement.

Moscow and Havana would like to see Handal's faction dominate any future government established by the guerrillas. Much of the group's influence is due to continued Soviet and Cuban support.

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

The PRTC is the smallest, least influential faction in the FMLN and has claimed responsibility for many bombings and assassinations. It has close ties to the Cubans and the Nicaraguans.

Nicaraguans have served in leadership posts.

Military operations were conducted under the name of the PRTC until a separate military organization, the Revolutionary Armed Forces for Popular Liberation (FARLP), was created following the March 1982 election. The PRTC's mass organization, the Popular Liberation Movement (MLP), was founded in 1979.

The PRTC's estimated 700 to 850 insurgents are organized into the mobile Luis Adalberto Diaz Detachment with three columns of about 115 combatants each, and 300 to 450 territorial and militia troops subordinate to commands in the Central and Paracentral Fronts and in the northern and southern portions of the Eastern Front. The PRTC has been responsible for most of the terrorist activity in San Salvador this year, including the temporary takeover in September of six radio stations to broadcast propaganda. The FARLP also maintains an independent logistic organization in southeastern El Salvador, which is involved in medical support and coordinates resupply activity with the ERP.

The FAL reorganized its combat forces in April 1983, creating the Rafael Aguinada Carranza Battalion in the Guazapa area, a second battalion headquartered in the Cerros de San Pedro area in northern San Vicente Department, and two mobile companies. About 250 combatants were attached to the battalions and approximately 100 to each company. In late 1983, the FAL probably established a fifth front consisting of another company-sized unit in northeastern El Salvador. We estimate that FAL forces now number between 1,160 and 1,325 insurgents. Their units have become increasingly integrated into the FPL's military structure.

The Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers (PRTC)

The PRTC was founded as a regional party organization in Costa Rica and has branches in all Central American countries. The Salvadoran branch, headed by Roberto Roca, is the most active.

Revolutionary Workers' Movement (MOR)

In a communique published in December 1983, the FPL announced that a splinter group had emerged in San Salvador calling itself the Salvador Cayetano Carpio Revolutionary Workers' Movement (MOR). The communique said this group was pledged to follow the more dogmatic line of former FPL commander Carpio and noted that the FPL needed to espouse a less fanatical ideology.

In late 1983, another renegade FPL group, the Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front (CER), was conducting terrorist operations in San Salvador. However, the CER probably joined forces with the

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

MOR in early 1984 and [] the leaders of both groups had served as commanders in the FPL's former Metropolitan Front. Former FPL commander Filomeno Ramirez appears to be in charge of the MOR []

The MOR and the CER have been described as a group of about 100 dangerous, well-trained terrorists operating in San Salvador and, to a lesser extent, in Usulután, San Miguel, and Santa Ana []

[] they may also have a small rural unit with some 20 armed members. In 1983 they reportedly were involved in the May killing of US Navy Lt. Comdr. Schaufelberger and in the June attack on the US Embassy. In 1984, they have been linked to the January killing of rightwing legislator Ricardo Arnaldo Pohl, the May robbery of a supermarket in San Salvador in which numerous hostages were taken, and a June attack on civil defense forces in Quezaltepeque. []

On several occasions the FPL has publicly disassociated itself from the MOR and the CER, and only the PRTC among the other insurgent factions has shown any willingness to cooperate with the dissidents []

[] In view of its small size and internal problems, the FMLN leadership is not likely to recognize the MOR as a legitimate guerrilla faction. []

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

Appendix B

Factionalism: A Chronic Problem

Common goals and personal backgrounds have helped to hold the guerrillas together, but at the same time serious rifts have always existed as a result of fundamental differences over policy and strategy and personal rivalries. Presently existing components of the movement date from the 1970s, as one group after another was formed by extreme leftists, many of whom originally were members of the Communist Party of El Salvador. In late 1980, owing largely to pressure from Havana and Moscow, the five groups united under the umbrella of the FMLN, but continued factionalism and a lack of coordination contributed significantly to the failure of the guerrilla's January 1981 "final offensive."

In the four years since the FMLN was created, it has had little success implementing directives intended to be binding on all member organizations. For example, two guerrilla factions were unprepared for the FMLN's "final offensive" in 1981, and the FPL did not participate in the general offensive that took place at the time of the March 1982 election.

One of the many issues that has sparked debate within the movement has been the distribution of funds provided by international humanitarian agencies. Early this year controversy centered on a proposal to allocate a 30-percent share each to the ERP and the FPL and 13-percent shares to each of the three smaller factions.

Such antagonism has appeared within as well as between the guerrilla factions. In 1982, differences within the FPL over the conduct of the war and negotiating strategy provoked a major rift when some young FPL leaders and deputy commander Melitón Anaya Montes—"Ana Maria"—began to press their top commander Salvador Cayetano Carpio to be more accommodating or to give way to younger, more flexible leaders. The dispute surfaced openly in April 1983 when Ana Maria was murdered by a group of Carpio's followers and Carpio then allegedly committed suicide.

Carpio ordered Ana Maria killed because she advocated greater unity within the FMLN and became more popular than he. When the top commanders were replaced by more conciliatory leaders several commanders in the FPL's Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front (CER) left the organization, taking with them all funds for the Northern Front. As a result, the Front was in disarray from August to November 1983.

Last December, a small group of Carpio loyalists left the FPL to establish the Revolutionary Workers' Movement (MOR). Members of the CER and the MOR probably operated for several months as separate organizations, but they now are one and the Front comprises the armed component while the MOR assumes political and administrative responsibilities. The FPL has tried to block the flow of any FMLN funds or weapons to the dissidents, referring to them as a renegade splinter group. They have claimed responsibility for several sabotage and terrorist operations earlier this year, including the assassination of a rightwing legislator, but recently this dissident group has been reft by internal factionalism.

The FARN and the PRTC also have suffered from internal dissension. As late as August 1983 guerrilla members were complaining that many of their leaders, including Cienfuegos, were living in Nicaragua where they had

Top Secret

Top Secret

access to houses, cars, food, and liquor. Living conditions are harsh for guerrillas for all factions and such rank-and-file dissatisfaction with the Nicaraguan-based leadership extends well beyond the FARN.

This spring,

urban units of the PRTC were showing a tendency to disobey orders from guerrilla leaders in Nicaragua. In May, a top PRTC leader was dispatched to El Salvador to reestablish discipline and to dissuade urban units from new killings, but they apparently ignored his instructions.

External Pressures

Havana has tried repeatedly to get the various factions to resolve their differences.

in the aftermath of the US invasion of Grenada last fall and the growing threat posed by anti-Sandinista forces, the Cubans informed guerrilla leaders that Havana would reduce assistance to them in order to channel more resources to the Sandinista regime. Havana directed the leaders of the various factions to resolve their differences in order to conduct the war more efficiently and to offset reduced aid from Havana.

Such pressures appear to have sparked more frequent meetings of the top guerrilla commanders during the past year:

- The guerrillas met in El Salvador in mid-October 1983 to discuss such divisive issues as the conflict between the ERP's desire to pursue a more vigorous military strategy and the FPL's more cautious, methodical approach.

agreement was reached on dividing responsibilities among the factions.

leaders of the five factions met again in late 1983 in northwestern El

Salvador to discuss factional problems in the FPL and to coordinate military and political strategy for 1984. One result of this session could have been the guerrillas' stunning success on 30 December when they overran the military's fourth brigade garrison in El Paraiso, Chalatenango, and destroyed the Cuscatlan Bridge over the Lempa River which connected Usulután and San Vicente Departments.

guerrilla leaders met in northern Morazan in early July to devise a coordinated strategy for future operations.

FMLN leaders met again in August in Cuscatlan Department to coordinate operations in the Guazapa area. Following this session, all five factions participated in a coordinated attack on a town in that department.

Despite such efforts, the guerrillas have been relatively inactive during much of this year.

the guerrillas' failure to disrupt the March and May elections largely reflected internal policy differences and an inability to agree on a coordinated military strategy

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

Tactical Coordination

[redacted] the FPL and the FAL have made substantial strides during the past year to improve tactical coordination of military operations and logistics-related activities. [redacted]

FPL and FAL forces have been conducting joint operations along the Cuscatlan/Cabanas border for over a year. These forces also participated in the attacks on the Fourth Brigade headquarters in December 1983 and on Dolores in eastern Cabanas in February 1984. [redacted]

[redacted] in late June units from the FPL, FAL, and the PRTC were involved in the attack on the Cerron Grande Dam and associated ambushes of government forces sent to reinforce those defending the dam. [redacted]

Efforts by the FPL and the FAL to conduct joint operations with the ERP apparently have proved less successful. In May an FPL commander [redacted]

[redacted] had to discontinue operations in the west because of difficulties in coordinating scheduling with the ERP. [redacted] the inability to coordinate political activities with military operations had kept the FPL from achieving its objectives for annihilation attacks, recruitment, logistics, psychological warfare, and the control of territory. [redacted]

In recent months relations with the ERP appear to have improved. [redacted]

the same factions reached agreement in mid-July to conduct terrorist operations in Soyapango, a suburb of San Salvador [redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

There was little evidence of PRTC involvement in joint operations with other FMLN factions until this summer. In May, [redacted] PRTC and FAL involvement in joint recruitment activities, and in June the PRTC participated in the attack on the Cerron Grande Dam. In July a PRTC unit [redacted] was distributing propaganda with the FPL in Soyopango, and there were at least two cases that month of PRTC involvement in joint ambushes along the Pan American Highway—operating with FAL and FPL forces in the first instance and with FAL and ERP units in the second. [redacted]

Cooperation among all the factions regarding logistics appears to be growing. [redacted]

The PRTC also appears to be coordinating logistic operations with the ERP in the east. [redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

Appendix C

FMLN Force Capabilities

Force Size

As of mid-1984, the FMLN had developed an effective combat strength of some 9,000 to 11,000 armed insurgents, including its militia forces. [] Of this number, we estimate that some 6,000 to 8,000 are well-armed, well-trained, and combat experienced. []

Senior Salvadoran military officials have said that the guerrillas were trying to build a total force of some 14,000 insurgents in preparation for a fall 1984 offensive, but we believe insurgent leaders have encountered major problems in meeting this target. Salvadoran authorities estimate that from March through July 1984 the guerrillas had impressed over 1,500 people, mostly youths in eastern portions of El Salvador; the total number of Salvadorans forcibly recruited in 1984 could well exceed 3,000. []

[] the forced recruitment campaign was designed to augment guerrilla ranks depleted by desertions and combat losses as well as to provide personnel for special fighting units being formed in preparation for a planned fall offensive. The guerrillas intend to use these units as primary strike forces and auxiliary or support units. []

A variety of reports, however, indicate substantial attrition of guerrilla ranks in 1984. In an interview last May, Army Chief of Staff Colonel Blandon said there had been 900 guerrilla desertions since December 1983, compared to only a few dozen in the previous six months. Between August 1983 and September 1984, some 175 guerrillas had responded to a government amnesty program offering a bounty of about \$250 for turning themselves in with their weapons. Other reasons cited by guerrillas for defecting include hunger, cold, lack of pay, and the belief

that what they were doing was wrong. Large numbers of guerrillas probably also have deserted without notifying Salvadoran authorities. []

In addition, guerrilla ranks have been depleted by combat losses, but we cannot obtain accurate figures on casualty rates. The Salvadoran military estimates that over 1,250 guerrillas were killed from 1 January to 20 August this year. These figures may be exaggerated because they count guerrilla sympathizers and other civilians killed in the crossfire. The guerrillas also are known to retrieve the bodies and weapons of many, if not most, of their comrades killed in action. Guerrilla losses due to inadequate medical care are high. For example, a 16-year-old guerrilla deserter who had been forcibly recruited early this year cited three incidents in one month where 10, 12, and 15 guerrillas wounded in firefights died because of a lack of medical care. []

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

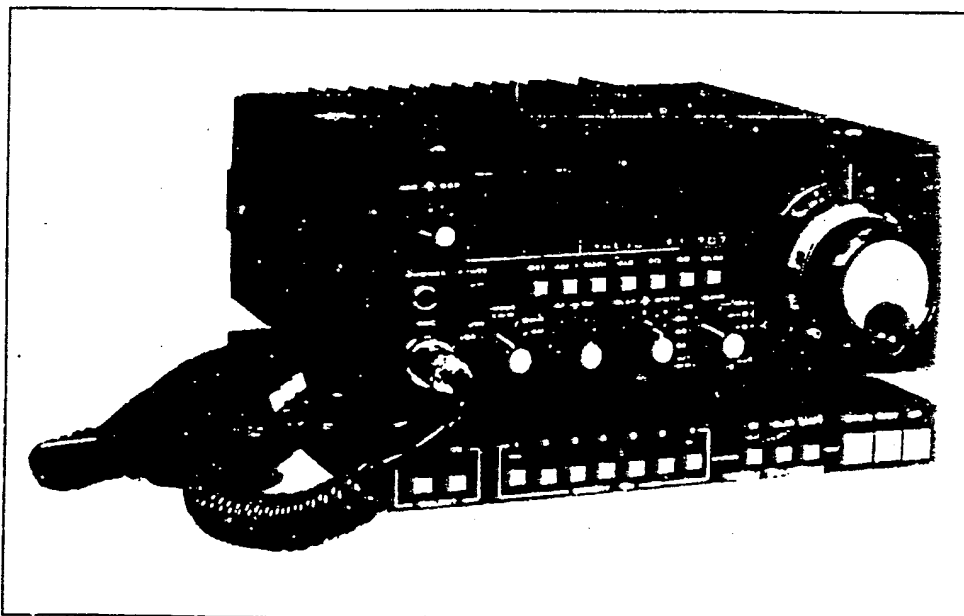
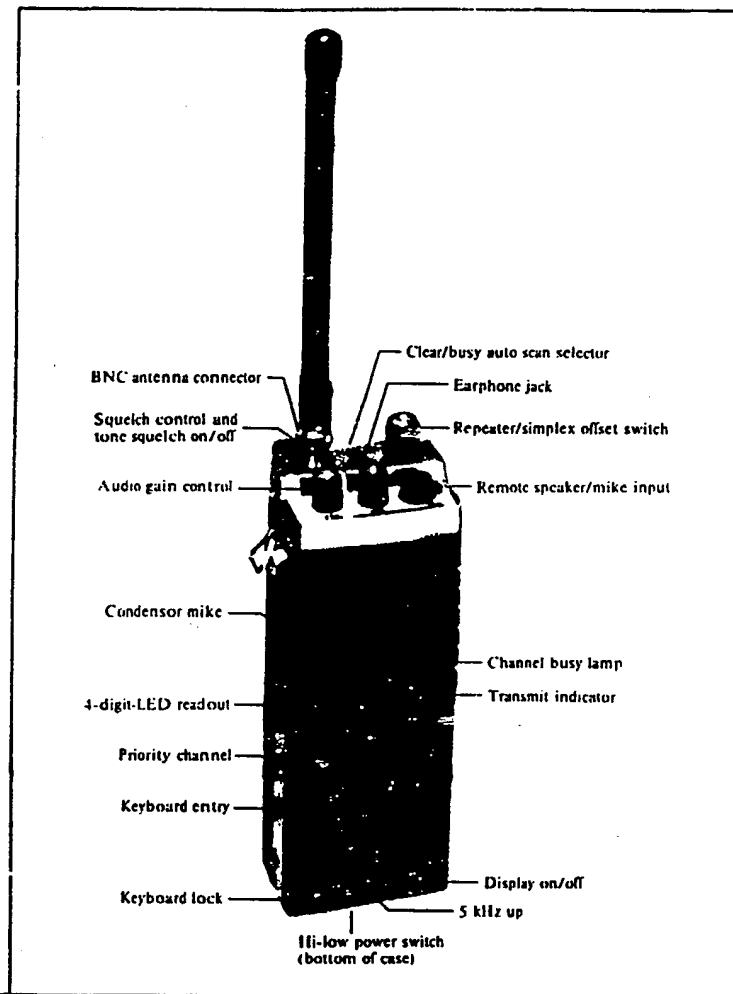


Figure 8. Guerrilla Communications Equipment.
FMLN HF short frequency radio (Yaesu FT-707)

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

Figure 8 (continued). FMLN
Handheld VHF radio (Yaesu
FT-107R) Ref.



~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

[redacted] the Cubans complained early this summer that the Salvadoran Government's vigilance and security practices have significantly limited the insurgents' ability to penetrate the Salvadoran armed forces and security services.

Training

Nicaragua, Cuba, and other countries friendly to the FMLN continue to play an important role in training Salvadoran insurgents.

[redacted] efforts to train guerrillas from all factions are continuing and possibly expanding in Nicaragua.

[redacted] from January to April 1984 Salvadoran guerrillas flew weekly from El Salvador to Managua, where some were transferred to another flight to Cuba and others remained to be trained by Nicaraguan military personnel at camps south of Managua.

[redacted] in June 1984 [redacted] a military camp under construction on the Cosiguina Peninsula in northwestern Nicaragua was used as a training camp for Salvadoran insurgents.

[redacted] in December 1982, 20 ERP members were sent to Cuba for a three-month course in "heavy artillery" and insurgent tactics. They received specialized training in the handling of 120-mm and 81-mm mortars, RPG-2 and RPG-7 rocket launchers, .50-caliber machineguns, 90-mm recoilless rifles, and military maneuvers. The group subsequently was infiltrated into El Salvador through the Gulf of Fonseca and sent to different parts of the country as artillery specialists and insurgent instructors. Another guerrilla who deserted from the FPL [redacted] said he received one year of training in Cuba in military tactics, marksmanship, communications, topography, recognition of the enemy, health, military engineering, and the politics of "liberated countries." He also was reinfilitrated through Nicaragua.

[redacted] the FARN runs a special school in Mexico where guerrillas are taught political analysis, the objectives of the revolution, and negotiating tactics.

Substantial training activity appears to be taking place in El Salvador.

[redacted] the presence of training camps accommodating as many as 300 guerrillas at various locations in northern San Miguel and Morazan, eastern Chalatenango, and southern Usulután Departments. The courses last from a few weeks to three months and usually include physical training, military instruction, and political indoctrination.

Foreign Advisers

Many of the foreigners who are working with the insurgents in El Salvador appear to be serving as doctors, nurses, or medics. During the past four years, however, foreigners also have served as combatants.

Top Secret

Top Secret

instructors, military advisers, and even as camp commanders or squad leaders.

Two Cuban advisers were infiltrated from Honduras into El Salvador by the ERP in February or March 1984. The two Cubans were veterans of Angola and were expected to remain in El Salvador for about six months.

Early this year 24 Cubans spent a month at an insurgent camp near Corinto, Morazan Department, where they provided instruction in the use of small arms and lectured on how the Cuban revolution applied to El Salvador.

Cuban involvement with the FPL was alleged by a captured guerrilla who said he was trained along with some insurgents at a camp.

An FPL guerrilla reported the presence of two Cubans at a base camp near Los Mangos, Chalatenango; he said one of the Cubans was in charge of physical instruction and the other was a squad leader. Another FPL insurgent said a 32-year-old Cuban commanded a camp near San Augustin in Usulután Department. According to press reports, a kidnap victim from San Vicente said he encountered 12 Cuban weapons instructors at the insurgent camp where he was held captive for several days in July.

During the past year there have been occasional reports of Nicaraguans operating with the guerrillas in El Salvador as well. An ERP insurgent identified a Nicaraguan named Williams, also called "Negro," as a column commander for the elite BRAZ brigade and another Nicaraguan as a column commander and director of a military school. An ERP insurgent also referred to a Nicaraguan called "Negro William" who he said had commanded a camp near La Corina in San Miguel Department. He added that a Cuban was in charge of political indoctrination at the camp.

Salvadoran military personnel have made numerous references to advisers of other nationalities serving with insurgent forces in El Salvador. In addition to Latin Americans, the Salvadoran military has reported the presence of individuals from the United States, Canada, France, Belgium, West Germany, Spain, the Soviet Union, and China. None of these reports has been confirmed, and in many instances the individuals cited may have been serving as doctors.

Funding

Little information is available on guerrilla sources of financing or how money flows through the organization.

We believe that most guerrilla funding comes from foreign sources such as international organizations and sympathetic governments.

The FMLN publicly admitted that four men who tried to rob a bank in Soyapango—a suburb of San Salvador—in August were FAL members and that the attack was justified by the guerrillas' need for funds.

Basic Necessities

The lack of medicine, food, shoes, and clothing appears as a growing complaint.

probably due in large part to more aggressive activities of the Salvadoran military in disrupting the insurgents' traditional base areas. Although some defectors describe the conditions under which they operate as difficult but manageable, others have spoken of desperation and low morale due to harsh living conditions in their camps. guerrilla leaders in El Salvador said in May that the biggest problem facing

Top Secret

Top Secret

the insurgents was the lack of medicine and poor nutrition. A villager from La Palma in northern Chalatenango Department reported [] that some 300 guerrillas in his area had become emaciated during the past two months and were poorly clothed and short of ammunition. []

The guerrillas appear to obtain most of their basic necessities from the populace either through donations or extortion. Robbery and roadblocks seems to be the most frequent means of expropriating goods: grocery stores and pharmacies are frequently broken into and buses and private vehicles are constantly stopped along major roads to extort money, shoes, clothing, and food. Because such actions undermine popular support for their cause, the guerrillas purchase food and clothing from local storekeepers when funds are available. []

Substantial quantities of supplies also are smuggled into the country from Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. According to a guerrilla who []

[] was captured [] food and medicine were brought to this house from Tegucigalpa twice a month and then smuggled across the border into Chalatenango Department. Other guerrilla defectors have reported regular deliveries of supplies to other parts of El Salvador from Honduras, using pack animals or trucks, and from Nicaragua using boats. []

Moreover, there is growing evidence that refugee camps near the Salvadoran border in Honduras sometimes serve as supply bases for Salvadoran insurgent forces. []

[] Honduran military officers had discovered a guerrilla supply corridor from the UN-sponsored refugee camp at Mesa Grande to Chalatenango Department. Honduran military investigators have determined that sympathizers in that camp repaired equipment and clothing for the Salvadoran guerrillas, and that insurgents used the camp for rest and medical care. In mid-June, Honduran soldiers clashed with armed guerrillas who had left the camp to rob nearby houses. According to the Hondurans, such incidents were increasing. []

Salvadoran guerrillas in northern San Miguel and Morazan Departments reportedly have used at least

two other Honduran refugee camps in Colomoncagua and San Antonio. According to a guerrilla defector, in early 1984 the ERP's BRAZ brigade obtained most of its food, medicine, and supplies from Colomoncagua. []

Insurgents in eastern El Salvador appear to be more dependent on nonguerrilla sources for their basic food requirements than their counterparts in western base areas. Although some peasant sympathizers provide food voluntarily to the guerrillas, an insurgent who deserted from the ERP [] said that in some parts of eastern El Salvador villagers were forced to cultivate corn, rice, and beans to supplement guerrilla food supplies. An FPL defector and a Salvadoran soldier who was an ERP prisoner said early this year that the guerrillas were paying farmers in several departments to buy seeds and fertilizer with the understanding that half of the harvest would go to the insurgents. The FPL defector also said the guerrillas often require peasants to turn over half their crops to the guerrillas. []

The guerrillas are known to have large plots of land under cultivation in the Guazapa area and in western Cabanas Department. An ERP defector also reported that from mid-1982 to mid-1983 he worked in a "food production unit" growing corn, beans, and rice for guerrillas based in northern Morazan. Plots of land that have been identified near guerrilla base camps in eastern El Salvador during the past year, however, do not appear large enough to feed more than those living in the immediate vicinity. []

The guerrillas seem to have developed no more than rudimentary medical facilities to support their combatants. According to a variety of intelligence sources, medical personnel with no more than basic training accompany combat units in the field. Captured guerrillas and defectors also have reported the presence of clandestine "hospitals" in most guerrilla base areas, but we doubt such facilities are well equipped or well supplied. []

Top Secret

~~Top Secret~~

Appendix D

Guerrilla Weapons Inventory

| | |
|--|---|
| Light infantry weapons | |
| Automatic rifles | |
| 5.56-mm M-16 (including AR-15) | .357 MAG revolver |
| 5.56-mm GALIL | .45-caliber revolver |
| 5.56-mm CAL assault | .25 caliber |
| 7.62-mm FAL | 9-mm pistol |
| 7.62-mm G-3 | .32 caliber |
| .30-caliber M-1 Garand | Crew-served weapons |
| .30-caliber Browning automatic (BAR) | Machineguns |
| .30-caliber M-1 carbine | .50 caliber |
| .30-caliber M-2 carbine | .30 caliber |
| Other rifles | |
| .22 caliber hunting rifle (30.06) | 7.62-mm M-60 |
| Czechoslovak manufacture shotguns (12, 16, and 20 gauge) | 5.56-mm or 7.62-mm HK-21 light machinegun |
| Submachineguns | |
| 9-mm H&K MP-5 (HK52) | Grenade rocket launchers |
| 9-mm UZI | M-79 grenade launcher |
| 9-mm Madsen | M-72 (LAW—light antitank weapon) |
| .45-caliber M-3 (Grease Gun) | RPG-2 (rocket launcher) |
| .45-caliber Thompson | RPG-7 (rocket launcher) |
| 9-mm Sterling (Police Carbine Mark 4) or 9x19-mm NATO L2A3 | Recoilless rifles |
| Pistols | |
| .45-caliber automatic | 57 mm |
| .22-caliber revolver | 75 mm |
| .38-caliber special | 90 mm |
| | Mortars |
| | 60 mm |
| | 81 mm |
| | 120 mm |
| | Air defense |
| | SA-7 (unconfirmed) |

~~Top Secret~~

BLANK PAGE

Top Secret

Appendix E

External Support: The Cuba-Nicaragua Pipeline

Our ability to monitor and quantify arms shipments to El Salvador since late 1983 has been hampered [redacted]

[redacted] most reports available to us from defectors and captured insurgents have concerned deliveries prior to mid-1983. Nevertheless, reliable information continues to indicate that the insurgents remain heavily dependent on Cuba and Nicaragua for ammunition and supplies, although their need for small arms has diminished. [redacted]

Reporting increasingly suggests that ammunition is the guerrillas' major priority this year. [redacted]

[redacted] the rebels, while continuing to infiltrate materiel from Nicaragua into El Salvador by air, land, and sea, had sufficient weapons to arm their combatants and were therefore primarily infiltrating munitions, spare parts, medicines, and clothing. Reinforcing the emphasis on ammunition, [redacted]

few weapons were being sent to El Salvador because the guerrillas had sufficient arms and the Nicaraguans had a greater need for the weapons themselves—apparently a reference to the increasing military challenge directed against Managua by the anti-Sandinista insurgents. [redacted]

Intelligence reporting this summer continued to emphasize the need for ammunition and the guerrillas' dependence on the Sandinistas for supply. [redacted]

[redacted] a Panamanian source said that Bayardo Arce—the Sandinista Directorate member charged with guerrilla resupply—told Panamanian Defense Forces chief Noriega that assistance from Nicaragua to the insurgents consisted only of ammunition, as the guerrillas were capturing sufficient arms from the Army to maintain their weapons supply levels. According to a Salvadoran [redacted] who was forcibly recruited and escaped in early June, the insurgents were capturing sufficient weapons from the Army to equip all new recruits. [redacted]

Sporadic reporting [redacted]

[redacted] shows a decline in the flow of weapons from foreign suppliers:

- An escaped Salvadoran soldier reported the arrival [redacted] of [redacted] rifles and [redacted] mortars at the camp where he was held prisoner. According to insurgents at the camp, the arms came from Cuba via Nicaragua and were transported to the Salvadoran coast by small boats.
- A guerrilla captured in February claimed an arms shipment—including mortars and recoilless rifles—was scheduled for delivery in early March.
- A defector from the ERP said that in mid-March she saw three airplanes land at a dirt airstrip in northern Morazan Department; one delivered about 200 M-16 rifles and ammunition and loaded several combatants whom she was told were going to Cuba.

Top Secret

Top Secret

Table 2
El Salvador: Guerrilla Weapons
Captured by the Salvadoran Armed Forces,
January 1981 to July 1984

Number of weapons

| | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | January to July 1984 | Total |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|-------------------------|-------|
| Total | 877 | 287 | 444 | 559 | 2,167 |
| Rifles | 751 | 266 | 370 | 550 | 1,937 |
| Machineguns | 6 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 13 |
| Machine pistols | 76 | 2 | 24 | 1 | 103 |
| Submachineguns | 10 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 16 |
| Grenade launchers (M-79) | 10 | 7 | 24 | 1 | 42 |
| RPG-2 rocket launcher | 24 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 44 |
| M-72 antitank weapon | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| Mortars | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 |

- A defector claimed in April that Soviet-made RPG-7s and 57-mm recoilless rifles, as well as RPG-2s of Chinese manufacture, were being supplied by the Sandinistas. The defector noted that the guerrillas were awaiting antiaircraft guns and SA-7 surface-to-air missiles.

the guerrillas received a shipment of mines from Nicaragua via Honduras in late May, while insurgents in central El Salvador reported the delivery of 166 rifles.

In July, Libyan military equipment destined for Nicaragua and for insurgent groups in Central and South America was being loaded on a Bulgarian ship. The Salvadoran guerrillas reportedly were to receive over 800 rifles and small arms, 10,000 grenades, and more than 130,000 rounds of assorted ammunition.

- A captured guerrilla said that an FPL camp in Usulután was resupplied with arms, ammunition, and uniforms by a small helicopter. The most recent delivery had been in July.

The specific deliveries and trends reflected in this reporting appear to corroborate the results of a study of guerrilla logistic activity prepared by the Central America Joint Intelligence Team (CAJIT) in the

Department of Defense. This analysis, compared estimated guerrilla deliveries to the known amounts of weapons and ammunition captured from government forces. The study concludes that as of February 1984 the guerrillas had acquired more than 12,227 weapons. At least 4,000 were on hand when the FMLN launched its March 1982 election offensive, and from May 1982 to February 1984 the guerrillas had captured at least 5,170 weapons and infiltrated another 3,057 (see table 1).

The CAJIT data also show that from May 1982 through June 1983 the guerrillas infiltrated roughly three-fourths of their ammunition and half their weapons. Since then, ammunition deliveries appear to have continued apace, but the number of infiltrated weapons seems to have dropped off substantially.

from 1981 to July 1984 the armed forces had captured only 2,167 weapons from the guerrillas (table 2).

The increasing unavailability of data because of more sophisticated concealment practices will make future calculations regarding arms flows more difficult.

Top Secret

Top Secret

Infiltration Routes

Since late 1983, additional information has been derived [redacted] on the routes and methods used by Cuba and Nicaragua to transfer weapons and munitions. [redacted]

[redacted] Havana is the source of all arms and munitions shipped clandestinely to the guerrillas by the Sandinistas. The arms are flown from Cuba on regularly scheduled Cubana flights in crates consigned to the Nicaraguan Ministry of Social Welfare. Upon arrival in Managua, the shipments are taken to a central warehouse for storage and eventual distribution. [redacted]

[redacted] Bayardo Arce coordinates this activity, assisted by Sandinista Army Chief of Staff Joaquin Cuadra. [redacted]

The same source also described the systems used for land, sea, and air deliveries:

- Arms for overland delivery often are concealed in compartments built into vehicles at a shop in Managua. [redacted] Loaded vehicles are then driven to preselected locations in El Salvador, where they are turned over to the insurgents.
- Seaborne shipments are trucked to transfer points along Nicaragua's northwestern coast, where they are loaded onto large canoe-type craft having a carrying capacity of 8 tons and then transported to Salvadoran beaches.
- Arms delivered by air are loaded at various airfields in Nicaragua and flown to dirt strips in El Salvador. [redacted]

We estimate, based on a variety of intelligence sources, that arms and supplies enter El Salvador through at least four infiltration corridors from Guatemala and at least nine routes from Honduras (figure 9). Most of the arms that are purchased on the international black market appear to be funneled through Guatemala. Overland shipments by truck, pack animal, or human porter through Honduras probably remain the most consistent method of resupply. Rugged terrain makes the Honduran frontier difficult to patrol, and the presence of a number of

large pockets of disputed territory restricts Salvadoran and Honduran military activity in those areas.

[redacted] A guerrilla [redacted] stated he was assigned to guard a safehouse in Honduras used [redacted] as a storage and distribution point for his faction's resupply. A number of intelligence reports also indicate that the insurgents cache weapons in refugee camps in Honduras and use these camps for resupply and other support activities. [redacted]

Seaborne deliveries probably equal or exceed overland infiltration. About a dozen suspected infiltration points have been identified along the southeastern coast of El Salvador. According to a variety of sources, supplies generally leave Nicaragua on board large boats or canoes and are transferred to smaller crafts in the Gulf of Fonseca at night and ferried to the beaches where they are picked up by the guerrillas for later distribution. [redacted]

Lesser amounts of materiel also continue to be paraded or delivered to a myriad of dirt airstrips that dot eastern El Salvador. [redacted]

[redacted] arms, ammunition, and other supplies were being flown into Honduras from Nicaragua and then transported into El Salvador. The aircraft used reportedly belong to the FPL and are regularly based in Nicaragua. [redacted]

[redacted] the FPL has decided that, if any problems are encountered with this mode of delivery, it would resort once again to bringing arms and ammunition into the country by sea. [redacted]

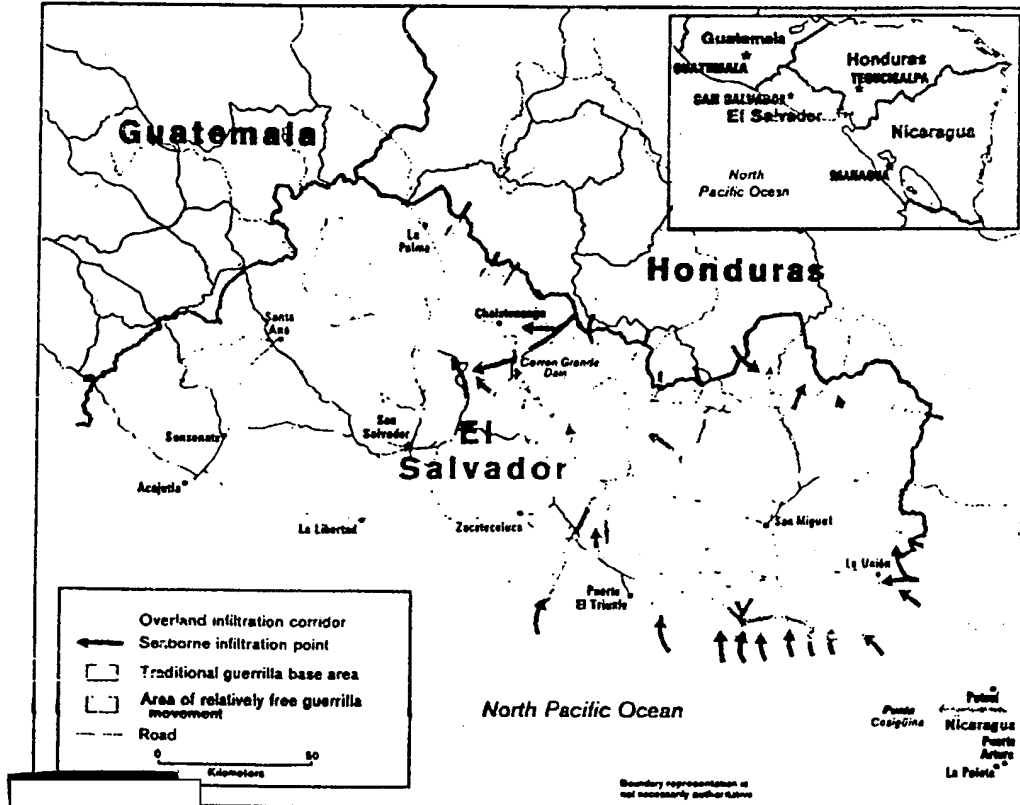
The sophistication of the guerrillas' delivery system is complemented by their flexible distribution networks. [redacted]

We believe most internal transshipment points are located east of the Lempa River, where the insurgents are strongest and geographically nearest Nicaragua.

Top Secret

Top Secret

Figure 9
Arms Infiltration



The guerrillas' distribution effort is likely to improve. the ERP, which is paramount in the east, traditionally had taken the

Top Secret

Top Secret

lead in receiving and distributing arms and supplies to all factions except the FPL—which ran its own resupply operations in the Lempa River delta

Other Foreign Suppliers

We continue to obtain information indicating that other suppliers are active, including countries in the Soviet Bloc, the Middle East, and Vietnam. For instance, analysis of 7.62-mm ammunition [redacted] strongly suggests Bulgarian manufacture, and similar ammunition recently was discovered in a guerrilla arms cache. Since late 1982, Bulgaria has shipped large quantities of military materiel to Nicaragua, some of which we believe may have been earmarked for delivery to the Salvadoran guerrillas or intended to replenish items the Sandinistas took from their own stocks and sent to the insurgents [redacted]

Salvadoran guerrilla leaders periodically visit Soviet Bloc and Middle Eastern countries seeking additional arms, and the timing of this particular deal suggests it may be part of the insurgents' planned fall offensive. [redacted]

Information regarding involvement by Third World radical states remains sketchy. In April, for example, [redacted]

Libya was experiencing difficulty finding a means to ship arms and equipment to Nicaragua and to the Salvadoran rebels. [redacted]

Regarding the Vietnamese connection, [redacted] the Salvadoran Army recently

Table 3
El Salvador: Trace Information on
M-16 Rifles in Guerrilla Hands *

| | M-16 Rifles (number) | As a Share of Total (percent) |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Total | 463 | 100 |
| Probably delivered to Vietnam | 372 | 80 |
| Originally sent to Vietnam by United States | 202 | 44 |
| Traced to US military units or depots in the 1960s with probable delivery to Vietnam | 90 | 19 |
| Produced by US manufactur- ers during the Vietnam era with probable delivery to Vietnam | 80 | 17 |
| Probably delivered elsewhere | 91 | 20 |
| Originally sent to El Salvador | 68 | 15 |
| Originally sent to the Somoza government in Nicaragua | 9 | 2 |
| Traced to other locations | 14 | 3 |

* As of 26 July 1984, 471 M-16s had been captured from the insurgents. [redacted]
Trace information is available for 463 of these M-16s, including 252 that were captured. [redacted]

captured an 82-mm mortar sight with Vietnamese markings. Eighty percent of the traceable M-16 rifles that were captured from the insurgents or that are still in guerrilla hands, [redacted]

[redacted] probably were sent to Vietnam over a decade ago [redacted] (table 3). We believe most of the equipment furnished by Hanoi was delivered in the early 1980s. [redacted]

Top Secret

BLANK PAGE

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret



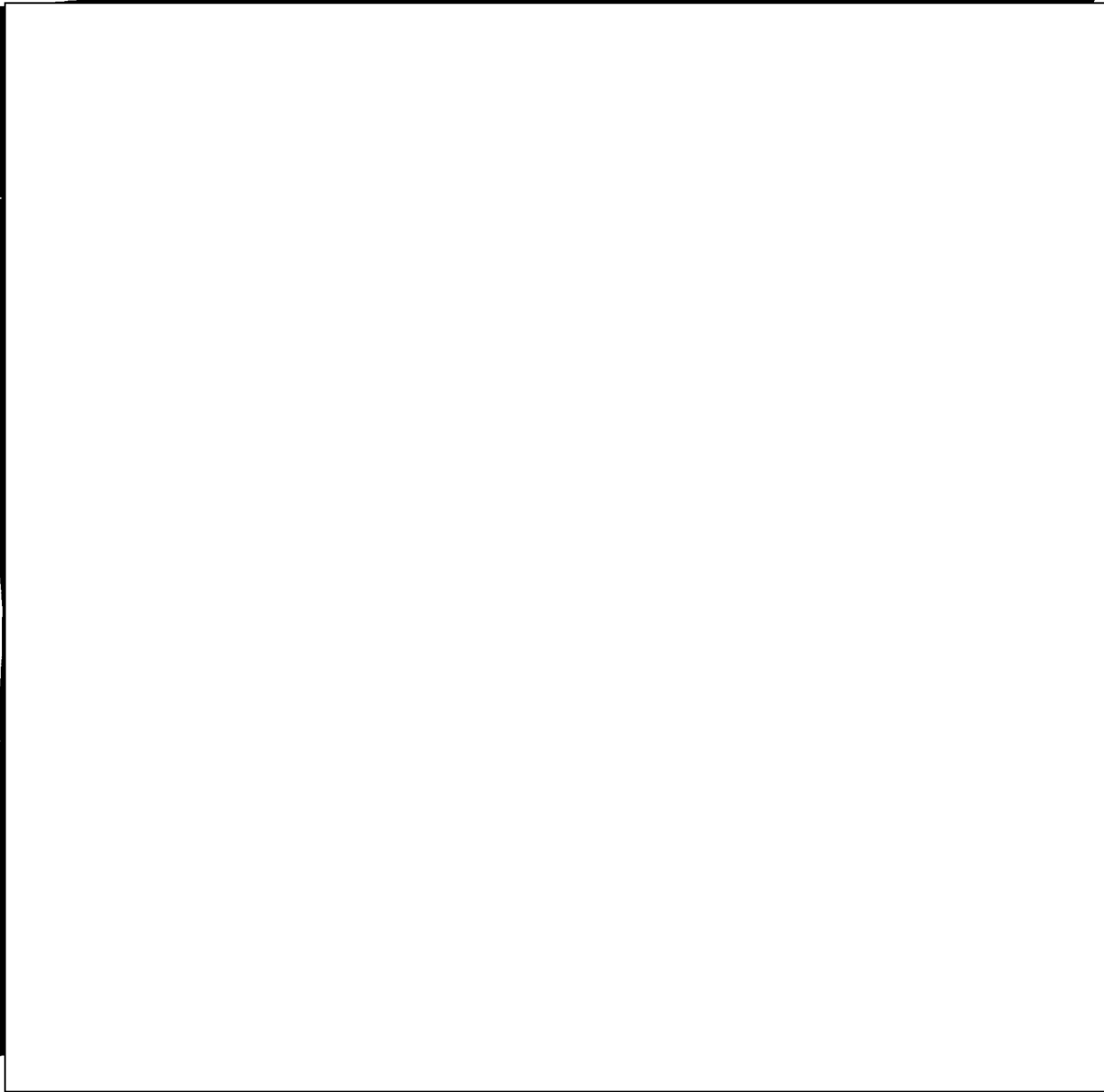
Top Secret



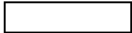
~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

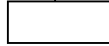


~~Top Secret~~





~~Top Secret~~

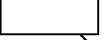


~~Top Secret~~



BLANK PAGE

~~Top Secret~~



~~Top Secret~~



~~Top Secret~~



~~Top Secret~~

